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The Nation. November 1, 1980 $1

EDITORIAL

THE REAGAN DANGER

We start with a strong presumption against returning President Jimmy Carter to office and a fundamental suspicion that although the differences between the parties will be magnified as Election Day approaches, in fact they share the fundamental values and political assumptions that have led to the present predicament.

Nevertheless, because we believe that a Ronald Reagan victory increases the chances for nuclear war, we urge our readers to vote to stop Reagan. In most states that means a vote for Carter. In a few states, such as Nevada, where Reagan holds a substantial polling lead, or Georgia, where Carter is a sure thing, we urge a vote for Barry Commoner (others may prefer David McReynolds or to cast a symbolic vote of no-confidence by leaving their Presidential choice blank).

We are as distressed as anyone with the major parties (to the extent that they still exist), which this year lurch more than ever toward Tweedledom. As we make plain in every issue, our sympathies are engaged by a nondoctrinaire democratic socialism. We aim to explore workable decentralized alternatives to the present system, and to face up to the implications of "our life as an empire," to borrow William Appleman Williams's phrase (see page 445). Obviously, the Democratic Party, with its deeply flawed incumbent President, a man who has abandoned even the mildly populist promises he made in 1976, has not earned our support.

And yet, survival in the nuclear age is now more perilous than it has been in many years. This fact makes our choice particularly hard this year because the true candidates of peace have no chance of winning, while the liberal off-again-on-again-born-again cold warrior who occupies the Oval Office seems quite capable of

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ELECTION SPECIAL

★ ★ ★

THE IMPERIAL REAGAN
Ronnie Dugger

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
Thomas Ferguson & Joel Rogers

AMERICA AND EMPIRE: AN EXCHANGE
Carl N. Degler
Martin Green
Lewis Perry
Virginia Held
William Appleman Williams

'THE SPIKE'
Andrew Kopkind

CARTER THIS TIME

NOTES ON THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE

JAMES BALDWIN

Gabriel's trumpet is a complex metaphor. Poor Gabriel is not only responsible for *when we dead awaken*—heavy enough—but he must also blow that trumpet *to wake the children sleeping.*

The children are always ours, every single one of them, all over the globe; and I am beginning to suspect that whoever is incapable of recognizing this may be incapable of morality. Or, I am saying, in other words, that we, the elders, are the only models children have. What we see in the children is what they have seen in us—or, more accurately perhaps, what they *see* in us.

I, too, find that a rather chilling formulation, but I can find no way around it. How am I, for example, to explain to any of my tribe of nieces and nephews and great-nieces and great-nephews how it happens that in a nation so boastfully autonomous as the United States we are reduced to the present Presidential candidates? I certainly do not want them to believe that Carter or Reagan—*or* Anderson—are the best people this country can produce. That despair would force me onto the road taken by the late, Guyana-based Jim Jones. But there they are, the pea-nut farmer and the third-rate, failed, ex-Warner Brothers contract player, both as sturdy and winning as Wheaties, and as well equipped to run the world as I am to run a post office.

There they are. And there is, also, the question, *Who* you *going to vote for, Uncle Jimmy?*

It can be said, of course—and let me say it before you do—that I am speaking as a black American. My testimony can, therefore, be dismissed out of hand by reason of my understandable (thank you) but quite unreasonable bitterness.

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EXCHANGE.

America and Empire

In our August 2-9 issue, which appeared on the eve of the Democratic convention, we published an extended essay by William Appleman Williams entitled "Is the Idea and Reality of America Possible Without Empire?" At a time when public attention was focused on the maneuverings of the Carter and Kennedy factions for delegates and squabbles over the platform, we thought it might be salutary to offer a history lesson, especially since Williams's essay cogently addressed issues of abiding importance. The essay was distributed to the delegates at the convention, and provoked considerable comment. There was a similar response from our readers, in addition to the advance critiques we solicited from members of our Editorial Board and others and printed at the time. Now, on the eve of the election, we thought it appropriate to publish a representative sampling of readers' comments, along with Williams's own rejoinder. Williams's essay, which demonstrates how the way we were affects the way we are, and can be, has become even more apropos after a campaign in which recourse to history has been limited to dredging up past Reagan howlers and Carter goofs. (Note: We urge all to read the entire Williams essay in his book Empire As a Way of Life, *recently published by Oxford University Press.)*

—The Editors

GENUINE HISTORY

Stanford, Calif.

Thank you for inviting me to respond to William Appleman Williams's recent essay in *The Nation*. As a fellow historian and fellow officer of the Organization of American Historians, I can only applaud Bill's wish to use history to help us transcend our past. To my mind, one of the principal functions and values of the study of history is that by telling us how we became what we are, history enables us to disenthrall ourselves, as Abraham Lincoln once phrased it.

For history to be used in that way, however, requires that the history be genuine, not simply a past interpreted for a preconceived end. Unfortunately, Williams's interpretation of the American past will not persuade anyone who is not already convinced of the thesis of the piece. His thesis, of course, is one he has pressed upon us for twenty years now, and he is certainly entitled to do so for another twenty. But he ought not call it history unless he is prepared to give us history that is self-critical, balanced and sensitive to all the available evidence. For if his essay is intended to be "a history lesson," then it can legitimately be held to the standards of sound historical analysis.

It is quite true that the meaning of the past changes as we look back upon it from different vantage points. But that does not mean that one may give any interpretation to a past event or person that pleases one. Good history requires that events of the past be seen not only accurately but in context; evidence that contradicts an argument as well as evidence that supports it has to be considered. I am not referring simply to factual errors on Williams's part, though there are those. I am sure, for example, that the Vietnamese, the Koreans, the Tibetans and even the Japanese, who still recall the kamikaze that saved them from a Chinese invasion fleet, would be surprised to read that the Chinese have not been given to empire. And I think American historians will be surprised, not to say dumbfounded, and H. V. Ames will roll over in his grave, to read that John C. Calhoun and John Quincy Adams introduced "amendments to the Constitution to legitimize secession." Others will also be surprised to be told that Lincoln addressed the Young Men's Christian Association in the 1830s inasmuch as the Y.M.C.A. was not founded in the United States until 1851, or that F.D.R. named the South the nation's number-one economic problem in 1936.

No, my principal concern as a historian is not with Williams's carelessness with facts but with his lack of balance and understanding. History is no more than myth if it is convincing only to the already converted. As such it may provide a pseudohistorical rationale for objections to present-day policies, but it cannot persuade those who are not already of that point of view. How Williams ever thought his assertions about America's imperial past would convince delegates to the Democratic convention in New York is a little beyond me. It may have been worth trying, but it should not have been billed as history. History is a discipline; it has ways of persuading people through the marshaling of evidence, the use of logic and the accounting for contrary evidence, as well as accurately ascertaining the facts. In short, it is more than simply a mirror of one's wishes.

Take Williams's interpretation of Lincoln. Since that President is an American hero of no small proportion, he must be fitted into the thesis that America has been hell-bent upon empire. To do that, however, Williams must first deny somehow Lincoln's well-known stand against the Mexican War, which most Americans now recognize as an imperialist war. How is Lincoln made into an imperialist despite that record? Why, simple enough: his acquiescence in the acquisition of the new territories from Mexico shows that his opposition to the war was only "a tactical maneuver to further his grandiose ambition" to spread the American empire into the South.

There is something odd about Williams's logic in analyzing the Civil War. Suddenly, Southerners are no longer Americans; instead they become victims of American imperialism, though earlier in his essay leaders of the South like Thomas Jefferson and James Madison are among the architects of American expansionism. Later in the essay Southerners of the post-Civil War years are depicted as long-suffering victims of the North; their defeat, Williams tells us, was so damaging that Lyndon Johnson and his fellow Southerners were impelled to support the Vietnam War because of the South's resentment and determination "to prove its valor and its equality."

Williams sees the Civil War as an act of imperialism against the South yet nowhere does a reader learn that it was the South that seceded even before Lincoln became President, or that the primary reason behind that secession was to preserve slavery. Now, Williams may believe that was sufficient reason to justify secession, but at least he ought to admit that perhaps there was more in Lincoln's and Northerners' minds than mere conquest. They may well have been thinking that the Union of their fathers was worth something, or even that to break up the Union over an elec-

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EDITORIALS.

Reagan

(Continued From Front Cover)

stumbling into an energy war in the Persian Gulf by sheer incompetence. The alternative, however, even for those who believe that the two-party system provides the salutary option of at least changing the guard in the White House while punishing the incumbent for breaking faith with the people, is a man whose record on the mortal issues constitutes a clear and present danger.

Carter's breach of the implied bond of trust between a people and their Chief Executive deserves further comment. His cynical disregard for his 1976 campaign promises—cutting the defense budget, for example—has made suspect the more attractive proposals he has permitted his speechwriters during the last weeks of the campaign. The departure from his Administration of Ambassador Andrew Young, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, Director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency Paul Warnke, Deputy Under Secretary of State Leslie Gelb and others who have worked even a bit for diplomatic sanity and resisted Zbigniew Brzezinski's preference for military solutions to political problems does not augur well for an enlightened foreign policy in a second Carter Administration. On the ledger of President Carter we list these failures:

§ His dismal, shifting record on the economy (recent promises to the cities and the poor to the contrary notwithstanding);

§ His swallowing of the bitter monetarist medicine of induced recession;

§ His kowtowing to Big Oil, giving birth to a massive "synfuels" program that will enrich the corporations and ravage the land;

§ His willingness to sacrifice the needs of the poor in his single-minded (yet clearly ineffectual) drive against inflation;

§ His self-righteous inability to work with the Democratic majority in Congress;

§ His diplomatic bungling at the United Nations, including the reversal of a U.S. vote on the eve of a political primary;

§ His ill-starred decision to admit the Shah of Iran into this country;

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§ His subsequent transformation of the hostage drama into domestic political theater;

§ The crude comedy of nepotism with his brother Billy as star.

The list could be much longer. It adds up to failure. His acquiescence in a theater-war strategy in Europe, the weakness of his support for arms control, his acceptance of counterforce strategy and the promulgation (to counter Reagan) of a "limited" nuclear war strategy in Presidential Directive 59; his "discovery" of Soviet troops in Cuba; his subsequent scrapping of SALT II in overreaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (a linkage his present Secretary of State has now abandoned)—all these are compelling reasons to look elsewhere for leadership.

John Anderson came from nearly nowhere because of the evident void. Like many others, we hoped to find in him a serious challenger to the underlying assumptions of both the established parties. But Anderson has been three kinds of disappointment. First, his performance in the campaign has been listless and bland—especially for a candidate who had the least to lose in terms of alienating established constituencies. The spontaneous moral sense he showed at the beginning, when he said the decision in public life he regretted most was his vote for the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, gave promise of a level of real independence which he never again attained.

Second, he failed to articulate issues that spoke to the real problems and concerns of the voters. This independent "straight-talker" found too radical even so mild (and poll-popular) a proposal as wage and price controls. He is, after all, a Republican.

Which brings us to the third disappointment with John Anderson—credibility. We do not speak here of his record of fifteen to twenty years ago, although that, as it emerged, shook liberals' confidence in him. No, it is his more recent votes in the 1970s that we find dispiriting. His active support of Richard Nixon's invasion of Cambodia, for example, and his support for the Vietnam War until 1973, a rather late date for a moral leader to jump off the juggernaut. On economic issues he backed Nixon and Ford down the line, including a strong defense in 1975 of Ford's vetoes of the emergency measures to alleviate the impact of the recession. He opposed the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Act until the last stages, when it was drastically diluted. Much has been made of his "courage" in advocating a 50-cent-per-gallon gasoline tax coupled with a rebate on Social Security. But this came late. He had opposed smaller gas taxes in Congress—such as the proposed 2-cent tax in 1977—long after the energy crisis and the need for conservation had hit home.

In other words, if, like Carter and Reagan, Anderson were running on his record, rather than his novelty, he would never have been considered a liberal alternative. And, in his subsequent campaign, his rhetoric has done little to redeem that record. Anderson can't win, so the parties will not be given a lesson. If one wishes to cast a protest vote why not make the *real* choice of another set of values and programs?

Commoner is the only candidate who seems to have a grasp of the energy crisis in terms of what Professor Williams calls the "crunch" issue—a world of shrinking resources. Unless we can cut down our consumption of nonrenewable energy resources, Barry Commoner says, we run the risk of bungling our way into a catastrophic war in the Persian Gulf. In October 1980 that risk has become a real one.

Beyond that, the major parties have failed us, as Commoner says. The giant corporations have, with the acquiescence of the parties, poisoned the air, water, soil—and the two-party system and government itself—while the poor, those who live in what James Baldwin calls "the house of bondage," suffer increasingly in the reciprocating cycles of bad housing, bad education, alienation and hopelessness. The two major parties agree on the need for more and more defense spending. They differ only on the size of the bill as they pursue the delusion of security in a garrison state.

The case for Commoner, then, is serious and honorable in terms of policy. But it requires a complacency about a Reagan Presidency that we cannot share.

Survival in a nuclear age is the foremost issue of our time. And it is upon this issue that we cast what amounts to an existential vote against Ronald Reagan. We are persuaded by the author of *Nuclear Nightmares* that a nuclear total war waged by ostensibly rational human beings is a much more probable event than most of us can admit. As Nigel Calder has written, "All the brainpower, ideals and technical skills of a great nation, and all the hopes and fears of more than 200 million people, are gambled in times of crisis on the performance of the national leader, as if on a prizefighter. This pseudo-god must by his skill convey firmness and yet avoid mutual homicide." Reagan is no pseudo-god.

Neither, of course, is President Carter. He is, if anything, very much a part of the problem. But at least it can be said for him that he does not believe, with Reagan, that the way to prevent nuclear war is to scare the enemy, for instance, by consciously playing what Reagan calls the United States' "trump card" with Russia—threatening it with "the possibility of an arms race."

There are other things that can be said on behalf of Carter. Latin American dissidents *have* benefited from his human-rights policies. His court appointments *have* been superior. He has *not* gained support from those who would teach "creationism" in the schools. But we prefer not to make the "lesser evil" argument. Our belief is simply that Reagan is a real danger. We have no doubt that a Reagan Administration would greatly increase defense spending, further downgrade arms control, heighten international tensions, jettison SALT II by claiming to leap onto SALT III and cause U.S.-Soviet relations to deteriorate even further, thereby strengthening the Kremlin hawks and adding to the risk of ultimate war.

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We don't want to take that risk. The practical alternative to Reagan, in the person of President Carter, is not appealing, to say the least. And so we regard it as a holding action. And yet, we also recognize that the choices the next time around are not likely to be much better unless and until those dissatisfied with mainstream politics organize to do something about it.

Hence, our recommendation—vote for Carter where you must, but for Commoner where you can. If 5 percent of the vote goes to the Citizens Party, it will be eligible for matching funds and can build for the future and begin to play an important role in national, state and local politics. Especially when there is so little to hope for from the top, it is important to invest energy, time and money on state, local and Congressional candidates who can begin to constitute a base for a genuine politics of opposition. Among those in *close* Congressional races, we recommend the following as deserving the support of readers who live in the appropriate states and districts:

Senate	*House*
Birch Bayh (Indiana)	Les Aspin (Wisconsin)
Frank Church (Idaho)	John Brademas (Indiana)
John Culver (Iowa)	Byron Dorgan (North Dakota)
John Durkin (New Hampshire)	Roy Dyson (Maryland)
Clark Gruening (Alaska)	Bob Eckhardt (Texas)
Elizabeth Holtzman (New York)	Joseph Fisher (Virginia)
Patrick Leahy (Vermont)	Mark Green (New York)
George McGovern (South Dakota)	Tom Harkin (Iowa)
Gaylord Nelson (Wisconsin)	Herbert Harris (Virginia)
	Robert Kastenmeier (Wisconsin)
	Carey Peck (California)
	Morris Udall (Arizona)
	James Weaver (Oregon)
	Howard Wolpe (Michigan)

Jamaica Chooses

Another election, held this week, draws our attention. That is the election in Jamaica, which is of great import to the Caribbean and the Third World generally. It pits Michael Manley, the incumbent Prime Minister, against Edward Seaga and his business-backed Jamaican Labor Party.

"We are the masters in our own house, and in our own house there shall be no other masters but ourselves," Manley told Jamaicans after his landslide victory in 1976. "Above all, we are not for sale." Manley's insistence on his small nation's right to economic and political self-direction has made him one of the Third World's most prominent statesmen—a leader in the nonaligned movement, an articulate spokesman for developing countries in the North-South debate. As he stands for re-election to a third term this month, Manley is paying for that commitment—in extraordinary economic pressures and organized terrorism at home. Yet his international prestige has never been higher.

Jamaicans are voting on whether to continue along Manley's democratic-socialist path or to turn to Seaga's conservative economics and foreign policy. At present, the polls show a close race, with Manley having narrowed the opposition's early lead. Unfortunately for Jamaicans, there are other parties with a vital interest in their elections. The United States, interested for obvious geopolitical reasons, has taken the attitude that he who does not do as I say is my enemy—or at least, not my friend, which amounts to the same thing. Against the backdrop of President Jimmy Carter's determination to militarize the Caribbean—military training funds have been proposed for no less than nine nations there for 1981, and U.S. naval vessels have been making the rounds all this year—Manley's amicable relations with neighboring Cuba and Grenada and his sympathy for the Sandinist Government in Nicaragua set a bad example of insubordination.

Indirectly at stake, too, is the prevailing (though by now none too popular) wisdom that the Government of a small, poor nation cannot buck the North-South system—in this case, the International Monetary Fund—and survive. That Manley called the current elections precisely to let Jamaicans decide what role, if any, the I.M.F. should play in the island's development was a courageous act which has rather embarrassed the stewards of the international economic order. Last March, Manley's Government, in desperation, broke off I.M.F. negotiations, further tarnishing the Fund's credibility at a time of rising Third World criticism. Then the developing nations rallied behind Manley at their June meeting on economic issues in Arusha, Tanzania, adding insult to injury.

Which is not to say that Manley has courted enemies; quite the contrary, he has sought U.S. investment, and for three years his Government conformed to I.M.F. guidelines in hopes of getting it—at great cost to his party's popularity and his people's welfare. But the not-for-sale sign is still up; the Prime Minister has proven that his commitment to nonalignment, a mixed and less dependent economy and basic social programs is nonnegotiable. Thus, while Jamaica has received assistance from such diverse sources as the Netherlands and Libya, Kuwait and the Soviet Union, Norway and Iraq, Argentina and Venezuela, it is now evident that the price for substantial U.S. investment and reliable I.M.F. support in Jamaica is Manley's removal.

The real options for Jamaica are few and typical of the polarization taking place throughout the Third World. Without U.S. help, the development strategy which Manley is charting would be a slow and painful one, a process whose stages are not yet known because there are no precise models. On the other hand, should Seaga dismantle the reforms and social programs of the Manley administrations—as he must in order to restore private-sector hegemony and bring Jamaica back into I.M.F.'s good graces—the popular response would make repression on a wide scale inevitable, a scenario that is all too familiar.

It is greatly to Manley's credit that he has tried a new way, hard as it has been, and that he has articulated so consistently the basic issue of contemporary Third World development: the need for the kind of international economic order in which no country would be for sale. We wish him success.

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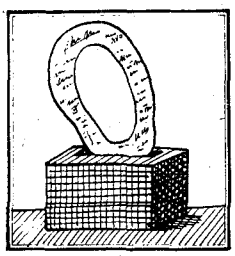
ARTICLES.

WHAT HE REALLY SAID

Ronald Reagan And the Imperial Presidency

RONNIE DUGGER



On October 19, stung by President Jimmy Carter's charges that he might involve the United States in a nuclear war if elected President, Ronald Reagan made a television address in which he defended his "peace through strength" doctrine and spoke of himself as a man who has a "deep and abiding hope for peace." But in his public statements over the years, Reagan has projected a consistent bellicosity that casts doubt on the authenticity of the "new Reagan" who emerged in the last days of the campaign.

The importance attached to the "moderate" Reagan is nowhere more evident than in the resistance the Reagan-Bush Committee offers to the reporter seeking the transcripts of the five-minute radio broadcasts Reagan has made since 1975, during the times he was not an active Presidential candidate. I have obtained a set of these transcripts covering the years 1975, 1978 and 1979, and they are a rich and revealing source of the candidate's views, for in these talks the real Reagan is speaking privately to "his people" rather than to the electorate. Other reporters have quoted from some transcripts, but I have sought here to assemble in one place the more pertinent views on foreign policy and national security issues contained in them, along with other public pronouncements Reagan has made. As Reagan has said, "I was on radio so many years with those five-day-a-week commentaries. I had a twice-a-week column in more than 100 newspapers throughout the country. How could I change my positions?" His question is his own to answer, in his own words. Revealed is a man who has reacted viscerally to a variety of foreign challenges. These reactions provide the best prognosis of how President Reagan would perform in the Oval Office.

Turning first to the Middle East, would Reagan send the United States to war for oil? He certainly advocates a U.S. military presence in the region. He has said he wants American aircraft and troops stationed in Pakistan, and the planes perhaps also in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere. Last January, he suggested that the planes be manned by U.S. pilots and serviced by U.S. ground personnel. "I think this might be a very, very good time for the United States to show a presence in the Middle East . . . with the consent of, say, Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia to have a presence there," he said.

Would Reagan meet Soviet aggression in the Middle East with military force? The truth, he replies, "is that we don't have the force. . . . Now, that is a shame because the Persian Gulf is valuable to us. We can survive without it, but it is absolutely essential to our allies in Western Europe and Japan." The paramount U.S. interest in the Middle East, Reagan says, is to prevent the region from falling under Soviet domination. He sees Saudi Arabia as menaced by the U.S.S.R. and advocates using military force to prevent the country's ruling sheiks from being overthrown by an uprising from within, as well as by aggression from the outside. As he told the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco last May, the United States should send the Russians a "signal": "We should let them know that we are not going to let Saudi Arabia fall, either from trouble within or from aggression without." In June, he expanded on this "doctrine": "We should follow a course of action that would lead [the Russians] to believe that if they . . . decided to go in there, they would be running into the possibility—the probability—of a confrontation with us. I question whether an uprising in Saudi Arabia would be totally free of Soviet influence. I think their hand would be in there stirring the pot and they would be ready to heed a call to bring order."

Elsewhere in the region, he wrote, "Specific Arab states such as Egypt . . . may well be able and prepared to take a front-line position in defense of Western security interests." He believes that the United States should have aborted the Khomeini revolution in Iran just as we overthrew the Mossadegh Government there in the early 1950s. "I believe at the time the revolution was just riots in the streets, we vacillated. We did not keep the promises we'd made to the Shah," Reagan said last fall.

He, too, would have admitted the Shah to the United States for medical treatment and, furthermore, after the hostages were taken would have given him permanent asylum in the United States. Would that not have jeopardized the hostages? He said their captors "made it plain it didn't make any difference if he was here or if we let him go." He advocated cutting off food shipments to Iran and suggested a naval blockade and the mining of Iranian harbors. Might the latter two measures endanger the hostages? He did not believe the militants would kill the hostages because of that. He favored a "date certain"—a deadline—for the hostages' release, after which the United States should take "unpleasant action," the nature of which he did not specify.

Concerning the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, Reagan

Ronnie Dugger, a reporter and the publisher of the Texas Observer, *has written two books,* Dark Star *(World/Gollancz), a biography of a pilot who participated in the bombing of Hiroshima, and* Our Invaded Universities *(Norton), and has been working since 1967 on a multivolume life and times of Lyndon Johnson.*

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proposed the United States "funnel" arms through Pakistan to the rebel Afghanis. Realizing that this language could be taken to imply U.S. aid to rebels fighting against Russia, Reagan later said that he had not meant direct shipments of U.S. arms to the rebels. He opposed President Carter's grain embargo against the Soviet Union in retaliation for the Afghan invasion, but a week later said the United States and its allies should suspend trade with Russia until its troops were withdrawn. "Why shouldn't the Western world quarantine the Soviet Union until they decide to behave as a civilized nation should?" he asked. A quarantine is a warlike act, and Reagan later said he was not recommending this, only urging that such a step be considered. This summer he carried his suggestion further, saying we should have told the Russians: "Look, don't talk to us about trade. There will be none. Don't talk to us about treaties, like SALT II," until the troops are withdrawn.

In January, he also said, about Afghanistan, "I think it's time to send signals by showing a presence, preferably in air power." By "presence," Reagan meant, according to Louis Berney in *The Rutland* [Vermont] *Herald*, "Not only would he dispatch planes to the Middle East . . . but he also would station a permanent naval fleet" in the area of the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean. He also, more famously, suggested blockading Cuba in retaliation for the Russian invasion. "I'm suggesting," he said, "that we might blockade Cuba and stop the transportation back and forth of Russian arms, of Soviet military." Again: "One option might well be that we surround the island of Cuba and stop all traffic in and out." George Bush, running against him, said, "That's a lot of macho." He quoted an ex-chief of naval operations saying it would "take the entire Atlantic fleet" to maintain such a blockade. And, Bush asked, "Why do you do that? Cuba didn't invade Afghanistan."

Anti-Anti-Proliferation

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan also provoked Reagan's call, early this year, for the stationing of U.S. troops in Pakistan. Discussing what the U.S. advisers would do in Pakistan, he said, "They would go to the country we have a treaty with, Pakistan, and that training could be provided there." Next he suggested stationing U.S. warplanes in Pakistan to signal Russia that continued aggression would lead to confrontation. Asked how many planes he had in mind, he said it could be no more than a squadron.

Then Reagan said he would be willing for the United States to abandon its efforts to prevent Pakistan from developing an atomic bomb, if, in return, it would agree to let our planes in. Did this mean he was not opposed to Pakistan acquiring a nuclear bomb? "Yes," he replied. Two hours later, attempting to counter the shockwaves his statement set off, Reagan revealed that he thinks the United States might as well stop resisting the spread of nuclear weapons: "India next door has them [nuclear weapons]. And India is very hostile to Pakistan. . . . What I am saying is that we have not succeeded [in halting proliferation]. The United States seems to be the only nation that is trying to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons."

Vietnam—the 'Noble Cause'

A further idea of how Reagan would employ U.S. military power if he was President can be gleaned from his attitudes during the Vietnam War. He went as far as anyone holding high office in calling for all-out war on North Vietnam. In October 1965, for example, after Lyndon Johnson had sent in troops and U.S. bombing of North Vietnam had become a pattern, Reagan said, "We should declare war on North Vietnam. We could pave the whole country and put parking stripes on it and still be home by Christmas." In the fall of 1967, Reagan said the United States should "impose its full resources to end it as soon as possible"—should "commit all the power we need to win a victory as quickly as possible."

Unmistakably, his mind had turned to nuclear weapons. Did he propose they be used in Vietnam? "No one would cheerfully want to use atomic weapons," he said. "But the last person in the world that should know we wouldn't use them is the enemy. He should go to bed every night being afraid that we might." The Korean War was halted, he recalled, after the United States "let the word get to the enemy by way of certain neutral sources that we were considering the use of atomic weapons."

Trying to fight in Vietnam with foot soldiers was wrong, he said, "when there are forces like Russia and China—Asia, generally—that can outman us." Instead, "the full technological resources of the United States" should be used, he said. Again—nukes? "Well . . . nuclear weapons, we hope, would not be resorted to," he said in 1967. In midsummer 1968, with peace in the wind, he said nuclear weapons were "neither necessary nor desirable in this conflict," though he thought we should not have assured everyone they would not be used. When the peace talks with the North Vietnamese got underway he said the United States should set a deadline in the negotiations and if it wasn't met, "kick the devil" out of them. Threatening invasion would be "a pretty good threat to hold over their heads" in the Paris peace talks, he said; and he implied he'd prefer the atomic threat by alluding again to Dwight Eisenhower's message to the Chinese in 1953 that the United States was going to "review its options with regard to weapons, theaters of operation, manners of fighting, and so forth." Reagan said, "The same thing . . . should be true in the Paris negotiations." As the Nixon Republicans took over the war, the Governor out on the Coast fell relatively quiet. But the sudden collapse of the South Vietnamese and the chaotic U.S. pullout reheated his bellicosity. Congress had lost Vietnam by acting "more irresponsibly than any Congress in our history" and had "blood on their hands," he said in early May 1975. By the month's end he was asking, "Can anyone think for one moment that North Vietnam would have moved to the attack had its leaders believed we would respond with B-52s? . . . B-52s should make a moonscape out of North Korea if South Korea is attacked."

Last August, Reagan was roundly cudgeled in the national press for an alleged blooper. At the Veterans of Foreign Wars convention in Chicago, he said: "For too

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long, we have lived with the 'Vietnam Syndrome.' . . . It is time we recognized that ours was, in truth, a noble cause." But the surprise was the media's surprise. Evidently the memories of reporters are even shorter than the memories of the people. As far as is known, there is not one scrap of evidence anywhere that Ronald Reagan has ever thought Vietnam was anything but a noble war. This tells more about his approach to the outside world than anything else can. Perhaps this is why most people preferred thinking he had blundered to realizing he had said what he believes.

When Johnson sent the Marines to Santo Domingo in 1965, Reagan did not comment, perhaps because he agreed. With Johnson's restraint when the North Koreans seized the *U.S.S. Pueblo* and her crew, however, Reagan violently disagreed: "I cannot for the life of me understand why someone in the United States Government, particularly the President, has not said, 'That ship had better come out of that harbor in twenty-four hours or we are coming in after it.' " If the ship and men were not out pronto, he said he would tell Pyongyang, "We're coming in to get them, and we'll use planes, guns, torpedoes, whatever it takes."

A few days later, asked if there might not be retaliation against the crew, he replied, "if you are going to be overly concerned . . . as to whether the enemy is going to retaliate in any way . . . what number do we set the limit on? How many of our citizens can be kidnapped by a foreign power before . . . [we] do something about it?" Perhaps this attitude explains the truculence of his more recent proposals about the hostages in Iran. At any rate, Reagan later said he had not meant that he would have sent American warships into Wonsan Harbor to take back the *Pueblo* by force. The United States should have moved within the first twenty-four hours, he now said, possibly by blockading North Korea's shipping or by seizing one of its ships on the high seas. Johnson's decision not to act immediately, in Reagan's view, was "a continuation of the appeasement that started a long time ago." Johnson continued to forbear to attack, and the ship and crew were safely returned.

Old Two-China Hand

The recent flap about Reagan's position on Taiwan, which angered the Communist Chinese, was treated in the American press as another Reagan fumble. Yet the incident is much like his remark that Vietnam was a noble cause—the surprise is the surprise. Taiwan and the Nationalist Chinese have been a recurring preoccupation of his. On radio in 1978 and 1979, Reagan raged as the Carter Administration moved to establish diplomatic relations with Mainland China and abrogate the U.S. defense treaty with Taiwan. The proposed relationship with Red China, Reagan said, was "based on betrayal of the Free Chinese on Taiwan"; in the new arrangement, the world's nations "have seen us cold-bloodedly betray a friend for political expediency"; "haven't we also betrayed millions and millions of Chinese on the mainland who lived with a dream of one day regaining freedom?" He urged that Congress provide Taiwan advanced weaponry so it would not "fall to the Communists."

In one broadcast in the spring of 1978, Reagan said he had the complete text of a 42,000-word speech by Peking's Foreign Minister, Huang Hua, delivered the preceding July. "He . . . asked," Reagan said, "if the American people have the will to share the fate of Taiwan if and when Peking sets out to conquer the Republic of China." The Minister answered his own question: "The United States is a paper tiger. . . . We can paint not only its skin but also its bones." Reagan then described examples from recent history that Huang cited in support of this view: "The firing of MacArthur because he wanted to win the Korean War and our failure to be decisive in Vietnam," as Reagan summarized them. Given the martial cast of Reagan's mind on the subject of China, it is easy to see why his advisers have sought to tone him down. After the fiasco of Bush's trip to China, when Reagan called for "official" relations with Taiwan, Reagan and his camp have been reassuring everyone that as President he would not change U.S. relations with Taiwan or maintain a "two-China" policy.

Darkness on Africa

Continuing our round-the-world trip with Ronald Reagan, we next stop in Angola. After President Gerald Ford had ordered covert military aid to anti-Soviet factions in that African country's civil war in January 1976, Reagan, vying with Ford in the New Hampshire primary and apparently needing to outdo him, said, "I think it's time for us to straighten up and eyeball them [the Russians]." On Angola he would tell them, he said, "Out. We'll let them fight it out themselves, or you're going to have to deal with us." He declined to say what retaliatory moves he had in mind. Last May he called for the United States to send weapons to the Savimbi guerrillas in Angola.

Later in 1976, Reagan suggested he would consider sending U.S. troops to Rhodesia. He had been saying, at the Sacramento Press Club, that the United States and Britain should try to mediate a transition to democratic majority rule and prevent bloodshed. How prevent bloodshed, he was asked. In a rambling answer he said perhaps the agreement would do it, or "Whether it will be enough to have simply a show of strength, a promise that we would [supply] troops, or whether you'd have to go in with occupation forces or not, I don't know." In a not quite grammatical sentence, he seemed to say, send troops: "But I believe in the interests of peace and avoiding bloodshed, and to achieve a democratic majority rule which we all, I think, subscribe to, I think would be worth this for us to do it."

Later, Reagan said his remarks had been hypothetical, but got himself into water still hotter with a candid discussion of sending troops to Lebanon, to Cyprus and elsewhere in the world. It will be best to reproduce reporter Robert Lindsey's account in *The New York Times* of Reagan's remarks four years ago:

> Mr. Reagan said there had been "many instances" where the United States had sent a "token military force," such as to Lebanon during the Eisenhower Administration, and suggested that it would not be inappropriate for the United States to do so if it could achieve a transition in Rhodesia. He

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suggested that the United States should have done this during the recent Cyprus crisis that also involved Turkey and Greece, and during the current Lebanese civil war, and said that he would favor such troop actions as President.

Cuban Blockade

During October Reagan said, "The Caribbean is being made—by way of Cuba, the Soviets' proxy—into a Red lake." He attributes the turmoil in Nicaragua, El Salvador and other Central American countries to Russia's ally Cuba. His readiness to send the Marines or the fleet down that way and his past invocations of the memory of Teddy Roosevelt must warm the old Rough Rider in his grave.

Concerning Reagan's suggestion that the United States blockade Cuba because Russia has invaded Afghanistan, Reagan's underlying views provide an answer to Bush's question at the time, "Why Cuba?" Reagan is looking for, or at least seizes on, reasons to blockade Cuba. "[Russia's] satellite state is ninety miles off our coast," he says. "Suppose we put a blockade around that island and said, 'Now, buster, we'll lift it when you take your forces out of Afghanistan'?" The blockade, he says, would be "a grave logistical problem" for Russia, and Cuba "could not afford that blockade." One of Reagan's top advisers in foreign policy, William Van Cleave, who is a defense policy analyst at the University of Southern California, thinks a blockade may be a good way to stem Cuban revolutionary activities.

Would not a blockade of Cuba lead to a confrontation with Russia similar to the 1962 missile crisis? The fact that the 1962 crisis brought the world as close as we have come to nuclear holocaust does not seem to be what stuck in Reagan's mind. In fact, he seems to believe President John Kennedy failed in the crisis. "We have seen," he said in 1972, "an American President walk all the way to the barricade in the Cuban missile crisis, and lack the will to take the final step to make it successful." (On the other hand, Reagan knows the United States "won" this showdown. As he has said, "In 1962 . . . our superiority was so great that Khrushchev had no choice but to back down.") Since, in achieving the Russian turn-back, Kennedy pledged that the United States would not invade Cuba, perhaps such an invasion is "the final step" Reagan was referring to.

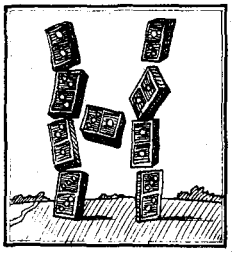
The most treacherous question of postwar U.S. foreign policy—what to do when left-wing revolutionary forces seek to overthrow corrupt but pro-United States dictators—was succinctly raised by the overthrow of Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua. Reagan conceded in a radio talk in 1979 that some Nicaraguans had justified grievances, but "most of the rebels are Cuban-trained." Their revolt was creating "another Communist country in this hemisphere." He charged that the Administration "arm-twisted the Nicaraguan Government as much as it could . . . to force Somoza to step down." Clearly, Reagan favored putting the rebels down and keeping the dictator in power.

The Implacable Enemy

What are we to make of Reagan? How does a man see the world who so frequently contemplates so much military intervention, in so many parts of it? Anti-Communism of the kind that was rampant in the 1950s lies at the heart of his beliefs. Russia is the eternal implacable nemesis. Communism is waging a worldwide war, and we are already in that war. Détente is therefore highly suspect, and the United Nations a joke.

"Every Russian leader," Reagan said this year, has advocated "a one-world Communist state, and they are going to aid social revolutions all over the world until the whole world has been liberated to Communism. And I think this explains what they're doing." Also this year he called the Russians "monsters" and spoke of "godless Communism," led by Russia.

With this underpinning of convictions, it is not surprising that Reagan has almost no use for the methods of peaceful diplomacy. In 1962, at President Kennedy's midterm, Reagan was orating, "We are being told that we can sit down and negotiate with this enemy of ours, that there's a little right and a little wrong on both sides. How do you compromise between good and evil? How do you say to this enemy that we can compromise our belief in God with his dialectic materialism. . . . How do you compromise with men who say we have no soul, there is no hereafter, there is no God?" Asked last summer if he wants to return to cold-war days, he said, "When did the cold war ever end?"



is unremitting contempt for the United Nations stretches across two decades. As Governor of California he refused to proclaim United Nations Day. The U.N. vote in 1971 to oust Taiwan and seat Mainland China, Reagan said, "confirms the moral bankruptcy of that international organization," which he also called a "ridiculous debating society."

Provoked in 1975 by the U.N. resolution condemning Zionism as racism, he said he was tempted to call for U.S. withdrawal, but instead said that if the United Nations continues on its present course we should serve notice "we're going to go home and sit for a while."

He is also hostile toward foreign economic aid. The Agency for International Development "is only one hole in a sieve," he said on radio in 1978. "Our money goes through a dozen agencies of the U.N. and such financial institutions as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Inter-American Bank and the Asian Development Bank."

Reagan's foreign policy proposes that the United States return to the role of world policeman. "We must be clear-voiced in our resolve to resist any unpeaceful act wherever it may occur," he said last year. After Russia invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968, Reagan, then Governor of California, suggested and argued for quarantining Russian borders.

He is hostile to trading with Russia. In 1975, discussing, on his radio show, the sale of American wheat to Russia, he said, "Maybe . . . we simply do what's morally right. Stop doing business with them. Let their system collapse." Last summer, again on radio, he condemned the sale of ball bearings to Russia because they are "just the kind needed for

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multiple warheads on nuclear missiles." This line of argument is an arrow aimed at détente, and that is precisely what Reagan intends it to be.

"As a consequence of this ten years of détente with us," he said this year, "the Soviet Union is now fueled by Western capital, run by American computers, fed by American grain." We are spied on by Russia and other countries "to such an extent that if the American people knew it they'd take the word détente out of the dictionary," he said in 1975. He still believed, as he said, that "the Soviets have never retreated one step from their avowed Marxist purpose of defeating us militarily." On radio that year, he charged that "détente's usefulness to the Soviets is only as a cover for . . . aggression," détente "fits their Communist dialectic" and détente is part of the Communist "doctrine or background."

Reagan believes there is a worldwide Communist monolith led by Russia which is masterminding all the trouble around the world—a belief that has survived the Sino-Soviet schism, the rise of nationalistic Communist movements in Vietnam and other countries and manifold other developments in the Third World. "The Soviet Union underlies all the unrest that is going on," he told *The Wall Street Journal* this summer. "If they weren't engaged in this game of dominoes, there wouldn't be any hot spots in the world."

As for the domino theory itself: "The theory has always been a correct theory. The dominoes are starting to fall now," he said in 1975. He believes the Central Intelligence Agency should engage in covert political activity abroad and that the United States should have a master plan to cope with "hot spots in the world" and to foment unrest in the Communist countries.

If Reagan is elected, then, he may be expected to send American power and people anywhere to fight Communism. It is the gist, drift and substance of his foreign policy ideas across two decades that under a Reagan Presidency, the United States will not, in his words in his 1964 television speech for Goldwater, "buy our safety from the threat of the atomic bomb by selling into permanent slavery our fellow human beings enslaved behind the Iron Curtain," will not "tell them to give up their hope for freedom because we are ready to make a deal with their slavemasters."

But how will we decide who is on our side? Reagan regularly condemns left-wing, but never right-wing, dictatorships. For instance, on radio recently he condemned the dictatorship of Equatorial Guinea, ruled, he said, by a Communist-backed dictator whose executions and brutality Reagan vividly recited. But after President Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in the Philippines, Reagan devoted two radio broadcasts to glowing reports on Marcos from a traveler who had visited the Marcoses and found both "still staunch friends of America and as anti-Communist as ever." As for the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile, in a radio broadcast last year, Reagan called it "a country getting back on its feet—and a good one to be friends with."

Clearly, Reagan's foreign policy calls for rallying democratic governments and right-wing dictatorships against left-wing dictatorships and all socialist-type revolutionary movements, whether those movements be, or turn out to be, democratic or Communist.

The Trump Card

Now present in Reagan's speeches, and apparently reflecting his convictions, is the idea that the United States should play what he calls its "trump card" with Russia—threatening it with "the possibility of an arms race" by suddenly launching a crash program. Reagan first made this proposal in 1977. According to a U.P.I. story, he said then that Carter has "one trump card that has never been used. We know and the Soviet Union knows that if there is to be an arms race, they can't even get in the same ballpark with us," and Carter should be willing to use the "threat" of a new arms race with the Russians. The "trump card" play stands or falls on the truth of the assumption that the Soviet Union cannot keep pace with the United States in building arms—which is highly dubious. This summer, to *The Washington Post*, Reagan suggested that an arms buildup by the United States would make sense because Russia cannot divert any more of its funds to arms and would come to the arms-control bargaining table. But Reagan indicated his view most starkly in a 1978 radio broadcast when he said:

> The plain truth is we cannot verify whether the Soviets are carrying out the terms of SALT II and it is a falsehood to suggest we can.
>
> In his June 28 column, journalist Ben Stein summed it up very well: "An unrestrained arms race which the U.S. could not possibly lose given our industrial superiority, or a treaty (SALT II) which says that the arms race is over and that we have lost it." And he asks—"which is worse?"

Reagan did not, on the radio, answer Stein's question, but there is little doubt what his answer would be: An unrestrained arms race is preferable.

Reagan's insistence on a military buildup aimed at U.S. "military superiority" might seem to the Russians to be aimed actually at the attainment of a first-strike capability. In January, Reagan explained extemporaneously, "What I have said is that our defenses must be whatever is necessary to insure that the potential enemy will never dare attack you. Now, if that is equivalence or if that is superiority, you must have the degree to know that you are safe. I could see that if you really strive for an obvious superiority then you may tempt the other side into being afraid and you continue escalating on both sides, but . . . it must be whatever strength is necessary to insure your safety and peace."

The haggle over the words "superiority" and "equivalence" (or "parity") seems like a nit-pick, but of course is not, because which kind of word one uses conveys momentous intentions and describes technological decisions of awesome import. The Republican platform adopted this summer calls for "overall military and technological superiority over the Soviet Union." Speaking to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, in August, Reagan apparently pulled back from the full meaning of superiority, saying, "I've called for whatever it takes to be strong enough that no other nation will dare violate the peace. This is what we mean by superiority."

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Reagan also seems to believe that the United States could not retaliate effectively if hit by a Russian first strike. This spring he told *Business Week*, "We need one of two things: either an offensive weapon that would give us a second-strike capability, so if the Soviets made that first strike we'd still have something to retaliate with, and damage them to the point where they'd never want to make the first strike; or some form of defensive weapon, like the lasers we are experimenting with."

Why does Reagan believe that the Russians could risk a first strike? He gave his reasoning in a 1978 radio broadcast, in which he said:

> Do the Russians subscribe to our belief in "mutual assured destruction" as a deterrent to war? Apparently we think so, but—just as apparently—the Russians do not. We say "thermonuclear war is unthinkable by either side." The Russians have told their own people that while it would be a calamity, it is not unthinkable; that it very well might happen and if it does, the Soviet Union will survive and be victorious.

For some time Reagan has been saying that Russia is preparing to win a nuclear war. These statements seem to imply, but they do not say, that Russia is planning to make a nuclear first strike. As early as 1975, Reagan said that under SALT II Russia could "make a first strike . . . with little fear of reprisal." Last year he said, "While we plan to prevent a war, the Soviets plan to win a war." The MX missile system, which Carter has quietly approved, and for which Reagan has also promised sped-up appropriations to get it operational as quickly as possible, may very well be widely perceived, when in place, as giving the United States a first-strike capability. In this very dangerous situation, Reagan is in effect indicating that Russia is planning to commit a first strike against the United States. If he is elected, what argument is to dissuade the Russians from concluding that Reagan is seeking to attain a first-strike capability against them?

Nuclear Reductions

What would be the prospects for a renegotiated SALT II treaty under Reagan as President? The first thing to be noted about Reagan as chief American arms-control negotiator is that he would not countenance a mutual phasing-out of the two superpowers' weapons systems to keep each side reasonably reassured that the other has not gotten too far ahead. "I would say to the Soviet Union," Reagan told *The Wall Street Journal*, "we aren't going to sit down at the table unless we're discussing the reduction of nuclear weapons."

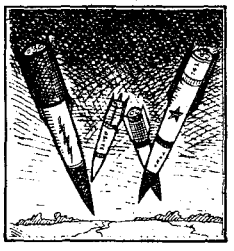
The catch, if it is that, may be found in a phrase Reagan first used on radio last fall. "Let's assure the Soviet Union," he said, "we will join in any arms limitation agreement that legitimately reduces nuclear armaments to the point that neither country represents a threat to the other." In Reagan's statement issued on October 10, he says, "The United States should be prepared to discuss an arms limitation agreement which legitimately reduces nuclear weapons on both sides to the point where neither country represents a threat to the other."

A situation in which the superpowers are denuclearized to the point where neither is a threat to the other would require all but total nuclear disarmament—a near impossibility in one round of negotiations. As schoolmarms and Russian specialists in English know, the omission of a comma before the word "which" in the last formulation quoted above means that the qualifying phrase restricts what it qualifies, and this means that Reagan was saying the only arms agreement the United States should be willing to sit down and talk about is one that will achieve a near impossibility.

Reagan's attitude toward nuclear weapons casts further doubt on his dedication to arms control. His enthusiasm for the neutron bomb approaches an epiphany. "By greatly limiting the local damage from an attack on enemy troops, the warhead would help preserve the homeland of Western Europeans from the devastation of war," he said recently. And on radio in 1978, he was even more enthusiastic:

> Very simply it is the dreamed-of death-ray weapon of science fiction. It kills enemy soldiers but doesn't blow up the surrounding countryside or destroy villages, towns and cities. It won't even destroy an enemy tank—just kill the tank crew.
>
> Now some express horror at this and, charging immorality, portray those who would use such a weapon as placing a higher value on property than human life. This is sheer unadulterated nonsense. It is harsh sounding, but all war weapons back to the club, the sling and the arrow are designed to kill the soldiers of the enemy. With gunpowder and artillery and later bombs and bombers, war could not be confined to the battlefield. And so came total war with noncombatants outnumbering soldiers in casualties.
>
> Here is a deterrent weapon available to us at much lower cost than trying to match the enemy gun for gun, tank for tank, plane for plane. . . . Indeed the neutron bomb represents a moral improvement in the horror that is modern war.

About the cruise missile, too, Reagan is similarly ecstatic: "You can shoot it down a pickle barrel at 2,000 miles."



hat will all the new arms Reagan claims we need cost? Reagan says Carter's 3 percent rise in the military budget is not nearly enough; according to *The Wall Street Journal*, Reagan's advisers agree that defense expenditures must rise at least $30 billion a year during Reagan's first term, and Reagan has told his advisers he is prepared to delay a balanced budget, if necessary, to spend more on defense. This could knock Reagan's rhetoric against inflation into a cocked hat, of course.

"I have never gone by the figures. . . . No, go by the weapons," Reagan said this year. "Just ask these men who would have to fight the war what are the essential weapons." (As Murray Rothbard remarks in *Inquiry*, "Sure. Just ask the Pentagon.")

"No, I'm not going to get us into war," Reagan told Hearst's Kingsbury Smith this year. Reagan's recurrent theme is peace through power: "I've always believed that if

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you have strong enough means of defense, you don't have to use them."

And what about President Eisenhower's historic warning to the American people as he left office that they should beware of the growth and sway of the military-industrial complex? Reagan remembers that too, although he did not refer to Eisenhower as he said last February: "There is only one military-industrial complex whose operations should concern us and it is not located in Arlington, Virginia, but in Moscow in the Soviet Union."

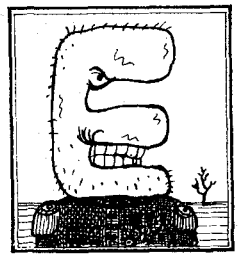
In the nineteenth or early twentieth century Ronald Reagan would be just another Republican President, another McKinley, another Hoover, distinctly on the backward-looking side, but the nation would survive him. He is like the nice old-fashioned Dad, unaccountably mean and brutal when things strike him the wrong way, whom everybody obeys but nobody really pays much attention to.

In the nuclear era, however, based on the record from which we must make educated guesses before we can vote, he is the most dangerous person ever to come this close to the Presidency, and if elected he would be the most dangerous leader so far in history. Reagan would have to decide whether to send weapons, planes or troops, electronically equipped covert-action teams or the Rapid Deployment Force, and Reagan would have to decide whether to "mash the button." In foreign policy, he would be little different, really, from Theodore Roosevelt, except for the means at his disposal—biological weapons, nuclear warheads we can "shoot down a pickel barrel at 2,000 miles," submarines that can kill whole clusters of cities and all the people in them. At Reagan's age, with his ideas and his advisers, in this era, he is a menace to the human race. That is my honest view, and as a citizen in my country still free, I say it. □

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY

The Empire Strikes Back

THOMAS FERGUSON and JOEL ROGERS



Engulfed by a tidal wave of nationalist, militarist and anti-Soviet propaganda, an otherwise confused electorate can be sure of one thing in this campaign year. Whatever the outcome in November, a sweeping militarization of American life has already begun.

Grim warnings about Soviet expansionism and the need for U.S. response issue almost daily from such prominent defense think tanks and lobbying groups as the International Institute for Strategic Studies, the Atlantic Institute, the Committee on the Present Danger and Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies. With their customary independence, the mass media amplify these warnings and play them back. TV mini-series vie with network white papers on the Red Menace, *Newsweek* trumpets "The Chill of a New Cold War," *Time* welcomes Washington's move "Back to Maps and Raw Power" and superhawk Drew Middleton's Pentagon-inspired ruminations on the decline of U.S. military strength are prominently featured at *The New York Times*, whose "Soviet Emigré of the Week" department has become as much a fixture of the paper as Anthony Lewis, James Reston and Mobil Oil.

The anti-Soviet campaign draws support from virtually all important sources of public opinion formation: corporations and government agencies, universities and major foundations, labor leaders and TV personalities, fundamentalists and Pope John Paul II. It pictures a world in marked contrast to that of only a few years ago, when we learned from many of the same people that the Soviet Union was a reasonable and responsible nation, thirsty for Pepsi-Cola, hungry for wheat, alive to the beauties of advanced computer technology and, above all, worthy of credit from the major American banks. At that time, U.S. relations with the Soviet Union were to be codified in the political structure of détente, never a precise concept, but one which always included the twin insights that the shared interests of the United States and the Soviet Union weighed against a policy of mutually escalating antagonism and that with the increasing fragmentation of world politics, U.S. foreign policy could no longer afford an obsession with any single country.

Suddenly détente is over, and bellicosity renewed. The hands of the Doomsday Clock have moved closer to midnight, and Mars again dominates the universe. How can this remarkable political disaster be explained?

In the U.S. press, resurgent domestic militarism is commonly portrayed as a rational response to recent Soviet aggression. By the conventional account, an iron law of international affairs holds that the power of the United States varies inversely with that of the Soviet Union and that the power of the latter is sharply rising. The Russian intervention in Afghanistan is but one part of a massive, largely successful, expansion of influence in the Third World. The Soviet Union's commitment to enormous military outlays at home betrays growing imperial ambitions. In the face of this threat, the argument continues, the United States must respond with a more aggressive military program, or face certain decline in national authority and the loss of vital interests abroad, perhaps even outright military conquest. Hence the renewed attention to our dwindling military strength and the calls for corrective action.

But this conventional account is unpersuasive, both in

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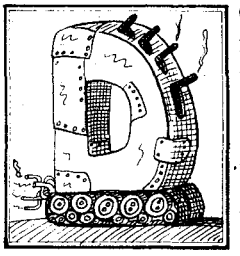
what it says about Soviet military power and what it leaves unsaid about U.S. domestic politics. Popular reports on Soviet expansion in the Third World tend to ignore the U.S.S.R.'s growing international isolation, its reversals in formerly friendly countries like Egypt, Guinea, Indonesia, Somalia and the Sudan, and the critical deterioration of relations between the U.S.S.R. and its Japanese and Chinese neighbors. Nor is much attention paid to the serious regional conflicts within the Soviet Union, the obvious difficulties it has controlling the domestic policies of Warsaw Pact nations, or the growing political independence of the Third World. The Russians have their own "arc of crisis" stretching from Gdansk to the Khyber Pass, although one might never glean this from reading the national press.

Popular focus on the sheer size of the Soviet military budget is equally misleading. Based on the almost certainly inflated estimates of the Central Intelligence Agency [see Victor Perlo, "The Myth of Soviet Superiority," *The Nation*, September 13], the aggregate figures give no indication of the direction of expenditures (fully one quarter of which go to Soviet defense against China) or the relative qualitative strengths of superpower weaponry. Even on the basis of the C.I.A. estimates, NATO currently outspends the Warsaw Pact nations. But even if it did not, it is difficult to see why such aggregate budget figures should or could be used to shape U.S. policy. The rate of American defense spending has never been keyed to the Soviet Union's military budget in the past and cannot be in any meaningful way because behind the money figures stand different production processes with incomparable technologies and capital-labor ratios. Like the "missile gap" of 1960, the "spending gap" of 1980 is neither accurate nor dispositive.

Even if one accepts the reality of a growing Soviet threat, however, one is no closer to understanding the dynamics of foreign policy formation here in the United States where, despite the current ecumenical militarism, there are continuing debates over the future of SALT II, the wisdom of the MX missile, the proper size of the defense budget, the focus of armed services personnel reform and the future of U.S. military policy in Western Europe and the Third World. These disputes are not merely tactical. They go to the heart of foreign policy design. And they are surely not explained by hypothesizing a common recognized threat from the U.S.S.R. Indeed, by assuming that the United States has a discernible "national interest" whose defense should determine our relations with other states, such explanations only obscure the sources of current policy debate and the persistent failure to achieve consensus on international objectives. Rejecting that assumption brings a new world into view, one in which foreign policy formation follows from the interaction between domestic political coalitions and the international economic order, "consensus building" merely describes the mobilization of different coalitions for economic exclusion and dominance, and the rise and fall of détente may begin to be explained.

The origins of détente can be traced to the crisis of 1968-69 and the recession of 1970-71. Those four years saw the first important challenges to the dollar, the first absolute trade deficit in recent U.S. history, sharpened rivalry between the United States and the rebuilt economies of Western Europe and Japan, discord within the International Monetary Fund, the collapse of the Bretton Woods monetary system, dollar devaluation and final abandonment of the gold standard, protracted defeat in Vietnam, mounting dissent at home and bitter disputes within NATO over the U.S. military future in Europe. Together the string of events signaled the end of America's golden years, the long postwar boom of U.S. international economic dominance, global military empire and steady domestic growth.

With the relative decline of the United States as a major profit center, American banks and industry quickened their search for investment opportunities abroad. One of the most promising candidates for investment was the Soviet Union. The U.S.S.R.'s size and political stability seemed to offer a large long-term market for American capital, technology and consumer goods, while normalization of U.S.-Soviet relations could serve as basis for curbing the enormous costs of strategic weapons systems, thus freeing up additional capital for investment at home. Pepsi-Cola's bubbling enthusiasm for the project was shared by Chase Manhattan, Caterpillar Tractor and a host of other multinationals and commercial banks. The age of détente began.



Domestic enthusiasm for an accommodation of U.S.-Soviet interests was never universal, however. The abrupt reversal of foreign policy that détente symbolized was fiercely contested by a broad range of U.S. interests with a stake in the arms race, protection from the pressures of international trade and the preservation of American commitments to such critical client states as those in the Middle East. These included the defense industry and its infrastructure of supply firms and consultants; the Pentagon and its extensive university clientele; declining industrial sectors that would be best served by protectionism; the leadership of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., which is best organized among declining domestic industries; Government-supported defense contractors, and the myriad supporters of Israel. Highly mobilized from the start, the vast anti-Soviet lobby undermined détente diplomacy by blocking Congressional approval of Most Favored Nation trade status for the U.S.S.R. and enlivened the early 1970s with right-wing attacks on the "liberal" policies of Henry Kissinger.

Formidable as it was, domestic opposition to détente would not have reversed the policy had some of its economic assumptions not been proven false. But within only a few years, the Soviet market for bank loans had approached saturation, and it had become apparent that the financial peculiarities of the Soviet economy favored barter deals and reciprocal production agreements which (especially without Most Favored Nation status) were most easily exploited by

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the geographically proximate Western European powers. Especially after the 1973-74 recession irrefutably demonstrated that the major industrial economies were leveling off, U.S. investors looked increasingly to the less developed countries of the Third World and Southern Europe as offering the greatest potential for growth and the expansion of markets. Economic growth in these countries had been impressive in recent years. While the U.S. share of world industrial production fell between 1963 and 1977 from 40 percent to 36 percent, for example, the less developed countries' share during the same period had nearly doubled, from 5 percent to just under 10 percent. Nearly all of this percentage growth came after 1970, implying that a fantastic expansion of national economies was underway with extensive capitalization requirements.

The message to hard-pressed U.S. industrialists and international bankers was clear. Particularly after the drastic Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries oil price rises of 1973, bank lending to the Third World soared. OPEC petrodollars were recycled through U.S. banks back to the rest of the Third World as public debt. Private-bank lending to non-OPEC less developed countries' governments increased some threefold, from $34 billion in 1974 to roughly $120 billion today.

Coupled with the progressive normalization of relations with China (which competes with the Soviet Union to be the big socialist market of the future and where Europeans have little of the comparative advantage they displayed in trading with the U.S.S.R.), this shift in investment focus crucially affected foreign policy debate at home. The existence of alternative investment and credit outlets lowered the cost of disrupting U.S.-Soviet relations. Increased economic exposure in the Third World (along with the region's growing political autonomy and the notorious perils of rapid development) produced simultaneous demands for a "liberalization" of U.S. attitude toward the region and enhanced capacity for discrete military intervention within it. And continued stagflation in the advanced industrial countries exacerbated international economic rivalry among the Western powers, further highlighting the potential leverage military power could provide in international relations, particularly in such critical areas as the Middle East.

Thus, virtually every trend in U.S. business interaction with the world economy has swelled the demand for greater military preparedness. But while all important segments of Big Business now champion more defense spending, no consensus has emerged on how large the increment should be or where the funds would be best spent. Nor is there anything approaching a unified view of the proper relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Programs like those of the Committee on the Present Danger (C.P.D.), which imply annual defense budget increases of 6 percent or more for many years to come, major new strategic weapons systems and a full-scale renewal of the cold war, appeal to the suppliers of the weapons, domestic businesses concerned about international competition, the Pentagon and those multinationals that currently feel especially vulnerable (e.g., many large oil companies). But while these constitute a powerful and effective lobby, they represent only one bloc of American business.

Strong opposition to large increases in the defense budget has come from the banking community, for example. Though some banking houses with a stake in particular regions figure to benefit disproportionately from much higher defense expenditures, many others are anxious about the inflationary effect of increased Government outlays. They fear that higher defense spending spells further increases in the Federal deficit and thus, in the usual Wall Street syllogism, higher inflation. Investment bankers, whose bond business could be severely hurt by double-digit inflation, have lately been prominent in their warnings about excessive military expenditures. (In recent months, even some of Committee on the Present Danger co-chairman Henry Fowler's partners at Goldman Sachs have urged defense spending restraint.) Fears about inflation, along with their outstanding loans to Eastern bloc countries, also limit commercial-bank enthusiasm for the military buildup. Although the Middle Eastern interests of these firms impel them strongly in the opposite direction, the position of American international banks today has some striking similarities to the City of London bankers of the mid-1930s, whose reluctance to rearm in face of the Nazi military buildup is constantly cited by American hawks. In driving up inflation, rising defense expenditures also accelerate international flight from the dollar, thus threatening the huge dollar deposits of the major international banks. Though he endorsed President Jimmy Carter's embargo on grain and other exports to the Soviet Union, and has defended the military buildup in the Middle East, David Rockefeller himself recently observed that "it would be a mistake to go back to the Cold War."

Such a belief is not limited to the financial community. Regardless of the difficulties of domestic implementation of détente, any number of multinationals find the logic of integrating the U.S.S.R. into the world capitalist economy as compelling as ever. (After Secretary of State Cyrus Vance resigned from the Administration in protest of Carter's Iranian rescue venture and the tilt toward militarism at the National Security Council, he was almost immediately welcomed back onto the *New York Times* and I.B.M. corporate boards, which he had left four years before.) And of course the farm belt is still anxious to sell the Russians grain.

The renewal of the arms race is certain to exert profound effects on American life. Already it has accomplished a feat that only a few months ago seemed as improbable as the sight of Henry Kissinger standing in Red Square. It has brought a once marginal figure like Ronald Reagan to the center of American politics and the brink of national leadership.

The early base of Reagan's campaign was the traditional Republican right, centered in small businesses and labor-intensive declining industries seeking relief both from labor unions and foreign imports. It had the support of many of the famous names of the Goldwater coalition, including brewer Joseph Coors, Justin Dart of Dart Industries and millionaire car dealer J. Holmes Tuttle, and soon enlisted

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U.S. Steel chairman David Roderick, who helped raise funds in the Pennsylvania primary against Trilateralist George Bush, and Jesse Helms, the textiles Senator who joined the Reagan camp after John Connally collapsed.

In foreign policy, the early thrust of Reagan's campaign was pointedly against the Eastern liberal foreign policy establishment. His opponents were attacked for their membership in the Trilateral Commission, and Kissinger came in for repeated drubbing. In seeking advisers, Reagan largely ignored the network that connects the Council on Foreign Relations, the Brookings Institution, the Trilateral Commission and other traditionally liberal foreign policy research centers. He drew virtually all of his foreign policy and international affairs personnel from the Hoover Institution, the defense industry, the ranks of retired military men, or the Committee on the Present Danger's quite selective executive committee.

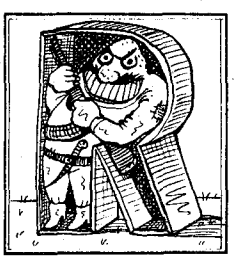
Prototypical of Reagan's early foreign policy supporters was retired admiral and former Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Thomas Moorer, a walking incarnation of the military-industrial complex who currently serves as a director of Texaco, Fairchild, Alabama Drydock and Shipbuilding, United Services Life Insurance, the U.S. Strategic Institute and the Retired Officers Association, adviser to the Admiral Nimitz Foundation and president of the Association of Naval Aviation. Prominent Committee on the Present Danger members in Reagan's immediate circle of advisers include chief foreign policy adviser Richard Allen, who had in the past lost several battles with Kissinger, and C.P.D. treasurer Charles Walker, who became active in the campaign after Connally folded. Other prominent and typical early supporters included issues adviser Edwin Meece, who is a former vice president of aircraft parts supplier Rohr Industries, and Donald Rumsfeld, who served as NATO ambassador under Richard Nixon and Secretary of Defense under Gerald Ford and is currently president of G. D. Searle and Company, a RAND trustee and a director of several corporations, including Bendix.

But Reagan's coalition was never a wholly typical right-wing protectionist one, as indicated by the early support he also garnered from key representatives of the international oil community. In the past several months, more and more oil industry figures have appeared around the candidate, including (in addition to Thomas Moorer) Exxon's Jack Bennett, Shell president J. F. Bookout Jr. and Standard Oil of California chairman H. J. Haynes. (Reagan's popularity with the large oil concerns suggests that his ultimate stance on the Middle East may not be very different from Carter's. Though Reagan has sharply criticized Carter for what he implies is a lack of support for Israel, he also quietly dispatched Connally on what a Dallas newspaper described as a "fact-finding mission in the Middle East." He reportedly has also told the Egyptian ambassador that he is prepared to offer the Palestinians a role in a "comprehensive" Middle East settlement.)

And as this column noted last June [see Ferguson and Rogers, "Another Trilateral Election?" *The Nation*, June 28], even before the Republican convention the signs of a shift in Reagan's elite coalition began to multiply. Bechtel vice chairman George Shultz materialized as a prominent Reagan adviser, as did Trilateralist Caspar Weinberger, who is currently Bechtel's general counsel. Later, despite strong pleas from his original core of supporters, Reagan refused to oust Trilateralist William Brock as head of the Republican National Committee and, again outraging the right, he selected Trilateralist Bush as his running mate.

As the campaign has developed, the tug of war between Reagan's various supporters has often become obtrusive, as in the flap over recognition of Taiwan. Even within a typical right-wing Republican coalition there are tensions between the internationally competitive defense industries and the declining domestic industrial sectors that would benefit most from a fortress mentality. With the addition of Big Oil and other internationalists, including select members of the international financial community, Reagan's campaign has reflected these tensions more than most. He has advanced some outright protectionist proposals (most notably his steel plan, which Carter then had to trump, or face the loss of Pennsylvania) but has held back from a full commitment to imposing tariffs on Japanese car imports and reversed his stand on aid to New York City, the use of antitrust policy against trade unions and the outright destruction of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Now with the campaign grinding to a close, Reagan's differences with Carter over defense policy are also becoming murkier. In part, this merely reflects the general rightward shift of foreign policy debate (exacerbated by the current Mideast blowout), which has led Carter to portray himself as a *responsible* militarist, "a military man, a man of peace." (Carter continues to urge moderation in defense spending and retains his commitment to the SALT negotiation process and has picked up support from an impressive number of investment bankers, including Salomon Brothers managing partner John Gutfreund, former John Anderson supporter George Ball of Lehman Brothers Kuhn Loeb and the ubiquitous Felix Rohatyn of Lazard Frères. But the great "3 percent vs. 6 percent" debate over defense spending increases has been blurred by the Administration's commitment to developing a Rapid Deployment Force and an overrun on this year's original defense budget proposal of at least $11 billion.) But it reflects as well the liberal foreign policy establishment's new attraction to militarist candidates as vehicles of domestic mobilization.



Reagan is not a Carter clone, and with his ties to the right will never quite become one. But the extension of his base within the business community has been steady, and in the last forty-five days has markedly accelerated. He has added more Trilateralists (including Michigan economics professor and Dow Chemical and Texas Instruments director Paul McCracken), acquired the public support of once reluctant Citibank chairman Walter Wriston and continued his court-

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ship of Kissinger, whose appointment as Secretary of State in the Reagan Cabinet is now being seriously discussed.

Beyond the remarkable possibility of a Reagan Presidency, however, the social costs of renewed militarization are clear. Whoever is elected next week, the defense budget will continue its inexorable rise, draining the domestic economy of productive investment and undermining the budget for social welfare. The regional wars which now decide the fate of our cities will sharpen, as the great urban centers compete ever more desperately for the last investment dollars and Federal aid programs. Energy-scarce regions with high unemployment, like the Northeast, will continue their slow decline, gaining only a modicum of jobs from the new Pentagon contracts while facing further erosion of their traditional industrial base. Public education will continue to deteriorate. Working people will be ever more severely pressed. At all levels of American life, the costs of military ventures abroad will compound the inequalities at home. Whoever wins the Presidency, most of America will lose. □

Notes

(Continued From Front Cover)

Well, I have had my bitter moments, certainly, days and ways, but I do not think that I can usefully be described as a bitter man. I would not be trying to write this if I were, for the bitter do not, mainly, speak: they, suddenly and quite unpredictably, act. The bitter can be masters, too, at telling you what you want to hear because they *know* what you want to hear. And how do they know that?

Well, some of them know it because they must raise their children and bring them to a place, somehow, where the American guile and cowardice cannot destroy them. No black citizen (!) of what is left of Harlem supposes that either Carter, or Reagan, or Anderson has any concern for them at all, except as voters—that is, to put it brutally, except as instruments, or dupes—and, while one hates to say that the black citizens are right, one certainly cannot say that they are wrong.

One has merely to look up and down the streets of Harlem; walk through the streets and into what is left of the houses; consider the meaning of this willed, inhuman and criminal devastation, and look into the faces of the children. *Who* you *going to vote for, Uncle Jimmy?*

John Brown, I have sometimes been known to say, but that flippant rage is, of course, no answer.

But, if we're to change our children's lives and help them to liberate themselves from the jails and hovels—the mortal danger—in which our countrymen have placed us, the vote does not appear to be the answer, either. It has certainly not been the answer until now.

Here one finds oneself on treacherous ground indeed. I am, legally anyway, an adult, a somewhat battered survivor of this hard place, and have never expected my power to vote to have any effect whatever on my life, and it hasn't. On the other hand, I have been active in voter registration drives in the South because the acquisition of the vote, there and then, and even if only for local aims, was too crucial and profound a necessity even to be argued. Nor can it be denied that the sheer tenacity of the black people in the South, their grace under pressure (to put it far too mildly) and the simple fact of their presence in the voting booth profoundly challenged, if it did not expose, the obscene Southern mythology.

Thus, though there is certainly no New South yet, the old one has no future, and neither does the "old" North. The situation of the black American is a direct (and deliberate) result of the collusion between the North and South and the Federal Government. A black man in this country does not live under a two-party system but a four-party system. There is the Republican Party in the South, and there is the Republican Party in the North; there is the Democratic Party in the North and the Democratic Party in the South. These entities are Tweedledum and Tweedledee as concerns the ways they have been able, historically, to manipulate the black presence, the black need. At the same time, both parties were (are) protected from the deepest urgencies of black need by the stance of the Federal Government, which could (can) always justify both parties, and itself, by use of the doctrine of "States' rights."

In the South, then, the Republican Party was the *nigra's* friend, and, in the North, it was the Democrats who lovingly dried our tears. But, however liberal Northern Democrats might seem to be, nothing was allowed to menace the party unity—certainly not niggers—with the result that the presumed or potential power of the black vote in the North was canceled out by the smirk on the faces of the candidates in the South. The party had won—was in—and we were out. What it came to was that, as long as blacks in the South could not vote, blacks in the North could have nothing to vote for. A very clever trap, which only now, and largely because of the black vote in the South, may be beginning to be sprung.

The American institutions are all bankrupt in that they are unable to deal with the present—resembling nothing so much as Lot's wife. When Americans look out on the world, they see nothing but dark and menacing strangers who appear to have no sense of rhythm at all, nor any respect or affection for white people; and white Americans really do not know what to make of all this, except to increase the defense budget.

This panic-stricken saber rattling is also for the benefit of the domestic darker brother. The real impulse of the bulk of the American people toward their former slave is lethal: if he cannot be used, he should be made to disappear. When the American people, Nixon's no-longer-silent majority, revile the Haitian, Cuban, Turk, Palestinian, Iranian, they are really cursing the nigger, and the nigger had better know it.

The vote does not work for a black American the way it works for a white one, for the despairingly obvious reason

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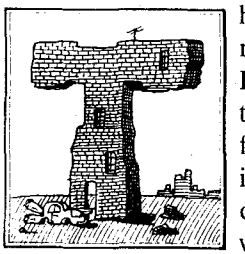
that whites, in general, are welcomed to America, and blacks, in general, are not. Yet, risking a seeming contradiction, one may go further and point out that America's egalitarian image is very important to American self-esteem. Therefore, blacks from the West Indies, say, or Africa, who arrive with no social or political quarrels with the United States, who have already been formed by the island, or village community, and who bring their mercantile skills with them, are likely to fare much better here than Sambo does—for a brief and melancholy season. Since the entire country is bizarre beyond belief, the black immigrant does not quarrel with its customs, considering that these customs have nothing to do with him. He sticks to his kith and kin, and saves his pennies, and is the apple of the white American eye, for he proves that the Yankee-Puritan virtues are all that one needs to prosper in this brave new world.

This euphoria lasts, at most, a generation. In my youth, the West Indians, who assured American blacks that *they*, the West Indians, had never been slaves, ran their stores, saved their pennies, went bankrupt and, as a community, disappeared—or, rather, became a part of the larger black community. Later on, the Puerto Ricans were hurled into this fire and, after the brief, melancholy and somewhat violent season, we began to compare notes, and share languages, and now here come, among others, the Haitians, and the beginning of the end of the doctrine of divide-and-rule, at least as concerns the dark people of the West.

The white person of the West is quite another matter. His presence in America, in spite of vile attacks on "the foreign-born," poses no real problem. Within a generation, at most two, he is at home in his new country and climbing that ladder. If there is trouble in the Irish, Italian or Polish ward, say, the trouble can be contained and eliminated because the demands of these white people do not threaten the fabric of American society. This proved to be true during even the bloodiest of the worker-industrial clashes: white workers opted for being white first and workers second—and, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, who said that they had to remain workers? It was easy enough to turn the white worker against the black worker by threatening to put the black man in the white man's job, at a lower salary. Once the white worker had fallen into this trap, the rest was child's play: the black was locked out of the unions, the unions and big business got in bed together and, whenever there was trouble in the ghetto, white America, as one man, cried, *What does the Negro want?* Billy clubs, tear gas, guns and cold-blooded murder imposed a sullen order, and a grateful Republic went back to sleep.

This has been the American pattern for all of the years that I have been on earth, and, of course, for generations before that, and I have absolutely no reason to believe that this leopard has changed his spots. Nixon was elected, after all, received his "mandate," by means of the Omnibus Crime Bill and the "Safe Streets Act" ("safe streets" meaning *keep the nigger in his place*) and his crony, the late and much lamented Gov. Nelson Rockefeller, who was responsible for the Attica slaughter, passed the Hitlerian "No-Knock Stop and Frisk Law," which brought every black person in New York a little closer to the madhouse and the grave. The Nixon career was stopped by Watergate, God be praised, and by the intervention of a black man, thank our ancestors; but Attorney General John Mitchell had already corralled several thousands of us, black and white, in a ballpark.

The United States is full of ballparks. My black vote, which has not yet purchased my autonomy, may yet, if I choose to use it, keep me out of the ballpark long enough to figure out some other move. Or for the children to make a move. Or for aid to come from somewhere. My vote will probably not get me a job or a home or help me through school or prevent another Vietnam or a third World War, but it may keep me here long enough for me to see, and use, the turning of the tide—for the tide has got to turn. And, since I am not the only black man to think this way, if Carter is re-elected, it will be by means of the black vote, and it will not be a vote for Carter. It will be a coldly calculated risk, a means of buying time. Perhaps only black people realize this, but we are dying, here, out of all proportion to our numbers, and with no respect to age, dying in the streets, in the madhouse, in the tenement, on the roof, in jail and in the Army. This is not by chance, and it is not an act of God. It is a result of the action of the American institutions, all of which are racist: it is revelatory of the real and helpless impulse of most white Americans toward black people.



herefore, in a couple of days, blacks may be using the vote to outwit the Final Solution. Yes. The Final Solution. No black person can afford to forget that the history of this country is genocidal, from where the buffalo once roamed to where our ancestors were slaughtered (from New Orleans to New York, from Birmingham to Boston) and to the Caribbean to Hiroshima and Nagasaki to Saigon. Oh, yes, let freedom ring.

Why are you voting for Carter, Uncle Jimmy? Well, don't, first of all, take this as an endorsement. It's meant to be a hard look at the options, which, however, may no longer exist by the time you read this, may no longer exist as I write.

I lived in California when Ronald Reagan was Governor, and that was a very ugly time—the time of the Black Panther harassment, the beginning (and the end) of the Soledad Brothers, the persecution, and trial, of Angela Davis. That, all that, and much more, but what I really found unspeakable about the man was his contempt, his brutal contempt, for the poor.

Perhaps because he is a Southerner, there lives in Carter still—I think—an ability to be tormented. This does not necessarily mean much, so many people preferring torment to action, or responsibility, and it is, furthermore, a very real question (for some; some would say that it's not a question at all) as to how much of Carter belongs to Carter. But if he can still be tormented, he can be made to pause—the

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machinery can be made to pause—and we will have to find a way to use that pause.

It is terror that informs the American political and social scene—the terror of leaving the house of bondage. It isn't a terror of seeing *black* people leave the house of bondage, for white people think that they *know* that this cannot *really* happen, not even to Leontyne Price, or Mohammad Ali, who are, after all, "exceptions," with white blood, and mortal. No, white people had a much better time in the house of bondage than we did, and God bless their souls, they're going to miss it—all that adulation, adoration, ease, with nothing to do but fornicate, kill Indians, breed slaves and make money. Oh, there were rough times, too, as *Shane, True Grit* and *Rocky* inform us, but the rules of the game were clear, and the rewards demanded nothing more complex than stamina. God was a businessman, like all "real" Americans, and understood that "business was business." The American innocence was unassailable, fixed forever, for it was not a crime to kill a black or a red or a yellow man. On the contrary, it might be, and was most often so considered, a duty. It was not a crime to rape a black or red or yellow woman—it was sport; besides, *niggers ought to be glad we pump some white blood into their kids every once in a while.* The lowest white man was more exalted than the most articulate or eminent black: an exceedingly useful article of faith both for the owners of the Southern fields and the bosses in the Northern sweatshops, who worked this exalted creature past senility to death.

Thus, what the house of bondage accomplished for what we will call the classic white American was the destruction of his moral sense, except in relation to whites. But it also destroyed his sense of reality and, therefore, his sense of white people had to be as compulsively one-dimensional as his vision of blacks. The result is that white Americans have been one another's jailers for generations, and the attempt at individual maturity is the loneliest and rarest of the American endeavors. (This may also be why a "boyish" look is a very decided advantage in the American political and social arena.)

Well, the planet is destroying the American fantasies; which does not give the Americans the right to destroy the planet. I don't know if it is possible to speak coherently concerning what my disturbed countrymen want, but I hazard that, although the Americans are certainly capable of precipitating Armageddon, their most desperate desire is to make time stand still. If time stands still, it can neither judge nor accuse nor exact payment; and, indeed, this is precisely the bargain the black presence was expected to strike in the white Republic. It is why the black face had always to be a happy face.

Recently, the only two black shows on Broadway were minstrel shows. There was a marvelous current between the blacks on the stage and the blacks in the audience. Both knew why the white audience was there, and to watch white audiences being reassured by a minstrel show can be grotesque and sorrowful beyond belief. But the minstrel show is really no different from the TV screen which celebrates, night after night and year after year and decade after decade, the slaughter of the Native American and pretends (in spite of *Roots*, which demands a separate assessment) that the black enslavement never occurred.

Well. It did occur, and *is* occurring all up and down America, as I write, and is crossing borders and being exported to various "underdeveloped" portions of the globe. But this endeavor cannot succeed, with force or without it, because the center of the earth has shifted. The British Prime Minister, for example, is a grotesque anachronism, and the world is not holding its breath waiting to see what will happen in England; England's future will be determined by what is happening in the world.

I am speaking of the breakup—the end—of the so-overextended Western empire. I am thinking of the black and nonwhite peoples who are shattering, redefining and re-creating history—making all things new—simply by declaring their presence, by delivering their testimony. The empire never intended that this testimony should be heard, but, *if I hold my peace, the very stones will cry out.*

One can speak, then, of the fall of an empire at that moment when, though all of the paraphernalia of power remain intact and visible and seem to function, neither the citizen-subject within the gates nor the indescribable hordes outside it believe in the morality or the reality of the kingdom anymore—when no one, any longer, anywhere, aspires to the empire's standards.

This is the charged, the dangerous, moment, when everything must be re-examined, must be made new; when nothing at all can be taken for granted. One looks again at the word "famine." At this hour of the world's history, famine must be considered a man-made phenomenon and one looks at who is starving. There is nothing even faintly ridiculous, or unfair, in these apprehensions, which are produced by nothing less than Western history. Our former guides and masters are among the most ruthless creatures in mankind's history, slaughtering and starving one another to death long before they discovered the blacks. If the British were willing to starve Ireland to death—which they did, in order to protect the profits of British merchants—why would the West be reluctant to starve Africa out of existence? Especially since the generation facing famine now is precisely that generation that will begin the real and final liberation of Africa from Europe. It is, in any case, perfectly clear that the earth's populations can be fed if—or, rather,

November 8 Issue—
BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS
Reviews by Peter Steinfels (Ronald Steel's *Walter Lippmann*), Barbara Grizzuti Harrison (Studs Terkel's *American Dreams*), Phyllis Rose (Justin Kaplan's *Walt Whitman*), Morris Dickstein (Joe Klein's *Woody Guthrie*), Roger Rosenblatt (Jean Strouse's *Alice James*), Dan Wakefield (Hilma Wolitzer's *Hearts*) & more more more.

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when—we alter our priorities. We can irrigate deserts and feed the entire earth for the price we are paying to build bombs that we will be able to use, in any event, only once; after which whoever is left will have to begin doing what I am suggesting now. It would be nice if we could, for once, make it easy on ourselves.

The elders, especially at this moment of our black-white history, are indispensable to the young, and vice versa. It is of the utmost importance, for example, that I, the elder, do not allow myself to be put on the defensive. The young, no matter how loud they get, have no real desire to humiliate their elders and, if and when they succeed in doing so, are lonely, crushed and miserable, as only the young can be.

Someone my age, for example, may be pleased and proud that Carter has blacks in his Cabinet. A younger person may wonder just what their function is in such a Cabinet. They will be keenly aware, too, that blacks called upon to represent the Republic are, very often, thereby prohibited from representing blacks. A man my age, schooled in adversity and skilled in compromise, may choose not to force the issue of defense spending versus the bleak and criminal misery of the black *and* white populations here, but a younger man may say, out loud, that he will not fight for a country that has *never* fought for him and, further, that the myth and menace of global war are nothing more and nothing less than a coward's means of distracting attention from the real crimes and concerns of this Republic. And I may have to visit him in prison, or suffer with him there —no matter. The irreducible miracle is that we have sustained each other a very long time, and come a long, long way together. We have come to the end of a language and are now about the business of forging a new one. For we have survived, children, the very last white country the world will ever see. □

EXCHANGE.

(Continued From Page 426)

tion was not especially democratic.

Besides, do we really learn much about our history in having the Civil War put in the same bag with the conquest of the Philippines, or having Lincoln's opposition to the spread of slavery linked to Harry Truman's containment of the Soviet Union? Are our historical understanding or our analytical tools sharpened by making Lincoln a precursor of George Kennan? Are not proper distinctions the beginning of clear thinking? (It seems to me that a more persuasively critical thing to say about Lincoln—though it will not make him an imperialist—is that he was quite willing to guarantee slavery forever in the South if the Southern states would agree never to extend slavery into the West. Or, as historian David Potter put it, Lincoln was willing to guarantee slavery where it was flourishing, but would forbid it in places where it had hardly begun.)

Nor is Lincoln the only statesman whose overt opposition to imperialism is made out to be devoid of significance. William Jennings Bryan campaigned for President against imperialism in 1900 and resigned as Secretary of State in 1915 in order to oppose Wilsonian interventionism abroad, but one would never learn that from Williams's essay. Bryan is painted the same pro-imperialist color as Wilson and T.R.

Where Americans are concerned, Williams is only too quick to label them imperialists. But where other nations are involved we do not need to look too closely. In Williams's view the responsibility for the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 is not something worth exploring; we need see it only as "one of those wars that anybody could have counted on to erupt sometime"! Couldn't we say the same thing about the Civil War, Bill?

My primary distress about Williams's essay is that it does a disservice to the discipline of history. Yet I cannot close without offering what I think a non-imperial America might look like if we built it on Williams's moralistic principles. It will be recalled that one of Lincoln's sins was that he acquiesced in the results of the war with Mexico; merely to have opposed the war did not demonstrate genuine opposition to imperialism. Taking this as the proper guide to morality, I conclude that in order to put the American house in good moral shape, the United States must return California, Texas and the rest of the Southwest to Mexico. And to undo the immoral conquest of the Confederacy, we should, by rights, let "the erring sisters go in peace," as Horace Greeley once suggested. Since one of the consequences of that conquest was the abolition of slavery, we ought to see what we could do to reinstitute slavery so that the South, as Williams put it, could have its chance "to go to hell in its own way." As for what we owe the Soviet Union for all those soldiers who died while the United States maliciously hesitated to mount a second front, it is hard to know how to compensate them. Presumably, though, the United States by then would be so truncated, so impoverished and so unthreatening to anyone that the Soviet Union in its generosity toward a former ally would graciously forget about the matter.

Carl N. Degler
Stanford University

STUDY COMPLEXITY

Medford, Mass.

I was very interested to read Prof. William Appleman Williams's challenging essay "Empire As a Way of Life." But I was disappointed in the way your respondents handled its challenge. It seemed that most of them understood Williams as—in the words of the first of them—posing the question: empire or democracy? But the crux of his argument was that in America that alternative has always been unreal; it has always been empire *and* democracy; the latter always led on to the former, because it meant expansion. "America was born and bred of empire"; and Williams's comments on James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and so on, were all a demonstration of that thesis. The alternative Williams offered was not empire or democracy but empire or imagination. He said we have to imagine a radically new politics, something to which no such familiar cry as democracy would be a clue.

. . . I think Williams is right, for I have found empire covertly animating the whole glorious concept of "adventure," so important in British fiction and general British sensibility, in the nineteenth century. (For, of course, empire was dominant in British and

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Western European culture too. As Williams says, "We are part and parcel of the imperial outreach of Western Europe that came to dominate the world. . . . We are *different* only because we acquired the empire at a very low cost.")

Thus the excitement of empire was to be felt, by Westerners and non-Westerners, in almost any Western expansion or energy, any triumph of technology or ideology, any Western dominance or splendor. Empire meant this, and means it, not only to Williams, for the sake of his argument, but to history, for everyone involved. That is why it is so hard to imagine a politics free from that infection.

Who or what, then, *can* help us to think about a truly anti-imperialist politics? Mahatma Gandhi and the post-Gandhian thinkers are surely the only men to have confronted and welcomed all the strange prospects of a nonexpanding way of life, without exponential growth, in the economy, the standard of living, geographical area, or cultural experiment. Moreover, unlike his mentor, Tolstoy, Gandhi was a politician; he called up the energies of nationalism, indeed he evoked the memories of past imperialism, to energize his movement. But his movement *was* anti-imperialist. It is that complexity we should study if we wish to educate our imaginations in the way Professor Williams asks us to.

Martin Green
Tufts University

RUNIC

Bloomington, Ind.

I was very interested in the August 2-9 issue. But I wonder what the Democratic delegates made of William Appleman Williams's analysis of American history, if any of them read it at all. It would be pleasant to think that they got something from Williams's—and *The Nation*'s—appreciation of the importance of thinking historically. I suspect, however, that it must have struck them as runic, with its idiosyncratic terminology and its rather bitter use of selected examples from the American past. Since Williams's method of presenting American culture is to string a few intellectual and political leaders in a single narrative line, I wish there had been some way to indicate that modern historical scholarship has been giving new insight into diversity and conflicts in American society and culture.

Beyond that, let me state my agreement with Williams. Americans, to different degrees, have enjoyed a life of imperial advantage and the test of the next few years—as of the last few—is whether we can adjust, without world war, to the dismantling of much of the system that has protected such advantages. I don't believe it is necessary for American citizens to denounce their past or to berate themselves as former colonials. In the past as in the present, issues have been complex and the course of innocence has seldom been clear. But the system *is* being dismantled, and the worst outcome of the current election year would be for liberals and intellectuals to support a Reagan ascendancy, which certainly means a disastrous attempt to restore an imperial past. At its best the first Carter Administration has worked for peaceful accommodation to a new world order. I think, for example, of the efforts of Andrew Young as well as the policies in Panama, China, Zimbabwe and elsewhere, including the Middle East, that the Reaganites denounce as making the United States "a second-rate power." Too often, for reasons of their own, liberals and intellectuals have joined in the pressures forcing the Administration to take a more belligerent course. Perhaps this election could really be a turning point.

Lewis Perry, Editor
The Journal of American History

FEMINISM AND IMPERIALISM

New York City

In the important article on imperialism by William Appleman Williams and notes by twelve commentators offered by *The Nation* to the Democratic National Convention, not a hint was included of what a feminist perspective on imperialism might look like.

It is feminists who are teaching American men, one resisted, grudging step at a time, to lower their expectations of being able to dominate others, to modify their habits of benefiting from the service and sacrifice of others, to adjust to the irritating fact that the costs of continuing to profit from the weakness of others may be greater than the costs of moving, at least slowly, in the direction of greater justice. It is adjustments analogous to these that are required before Americans can begin to imagine a nonimperial America. It may be feminists who can show them how.

Let us not underestimate the appeal of the macho in foreign affairs, but let us not forget, either, that the stance can no longer be assumed without the risk of ridicule. The awareness of such parallels *is* new, and as the macho in the bedroom is passé, out of it, a jerk, a joke, the macho imperialist may be next. Of course there are more subtle forms of domination, but in time they can be matched by more subtle forms of resistance.

Women at present working full time in the United States earn only 59 cents for every $1 earned by men. They already know how to live with modest ambitions, they already strive for progress measured in greater harmony and well-being rather than in more command over others and more lavish expense accounts. It is not part of any feminist program that equality between American men and women can be achieved by war and exploitation abroad to bring women's wages up to those of men. And the dismissal by Philip Green and those who may consider themselves realists of the concerns for the environment embraced by feminists and many others disregards one of the real political forces of the present. The move toward greater equilibrium with the natural sources of our wealth rather than accelerated depletion of the world's resources is no utopian ideal but an immediate objective of a significant number of Americans.

Feminists have not yet developed extended and detailed economic and foreign policy programs that would be compatible with feminist commitments. It should not be presumed they will have nothing better to offer than the tired laments of an earlier left, or that they will join American men in the defense of empire.

Some issues are simple, and the claim of complexity is often used to mask corporate interests, as the neoconservatives have so often shown us. But other issues are complex, and internationalism is surely one of them. Lines between unjustified meddling in the affairs of others and an irresponsible lack of concern for the human rights of others have to be drawn. Issues of women's rights make the difficulties all too clear. Distinctions between opposition to imperialism and self-righteous isolation need to be made. A willingness to sacrifice one's interests for the sake of justice will not be enough to promote justice for the weak. Many men are coming to understand that there are gains along with losses in the movement toward less exploitative relations with women. It is not impossible that

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Americans will come to imagine similar gains for themselves in their relations with the rest of the world. In the meantime, men often do better to use their power responsibly rather than to abdicate it completely. The latter course may simply yield the forum to the unyielding, adding to the entrenchment of domination.

Virginia Held
City University of New York

WILLIAMS REPLIES

Waldport, Ore.

I am a bit uneasy about two aspects of this dialogue, and I think it is useful to explain them at the outset.

The first and minor concern involves the long time lag between the publication of my article (August 2-9) and this exchange. I have a hunch that we are talking about something that most people have forgotten. Hence the conversation will seem more than a bit abstract.

The more important matter has to do with the problems inherent in the process. *The Nation*, by necessity, published a drastically foreshortened condensation of an extremely tightly argued book-length essay that is only 226 pages from cover to cover. So we are talking about a document that not all of us have read. That is frustrating—and misleading.

That said, herewith my response to the four principal themes or issues that have been raised, in one way or another, by the formal and informal remarks delivered to *The Nation*.

First: "Yes, or at least quite possibly, Williams is right, but what can be done?" Second: male chauvinism, and bisexual racism, in all its various forms. Third: whatever Williams is doing, it is not History. And, finally: empire is not empire unless it involves overt conquest. Clearly enough, all those issues are interrelated; but, at least at the outset, I choose to respond to them separately.

Let us agree, at least for the moment, that in the article I should have been more explicit about sexism and racism. I think that the book speaks to those issues more directly, even if, for some, too obliquely or cryptically. I do not feel defensive about this matter. Many, many women have been as macho-nationalist-imperialist-racist as men. And a good many of those women have been what we now call liberated. Indeed!

Apparently I made a mistake in assuming that the realities of sexism and racism (and its arguably more insidious ally, prejudice) are generally known in our time. By which I mean that in saying that the history of American foreign policy is very largely the story of white males acting on other Americans and other people is to document, directly or indirectly, the case made by feminists, blacks and other minorities. After all, the story of the winners tells you about the losers. For that matter, sometimes even more powerfully. If you keep asking about females and all those others, it may indeed dawn upon you that they had nothing to do with it all. They were powerless. They were either acted upon or ignored. Or they joined in!

But, and it is an important caveat, women and others can now raise crucial issues and define alternatives. Attacking white males is no longer enough. So I do not accept the proposition that we are talking about a choice between imperialism and self-righteous isolation; nor do I think that a serious reading of my essay (or book) indicates that I define the options in that way. Indeed, that is one of my central themes: stop thinking of it as an either/or proposition.

This matter of taming "macho" is rather like taming "liberated." Using power responsibly is by definition to use it with restraint. And with an understanding that the great circle route is often the shortest distance in human as well as nautical affairs. If nothing else, it has the virtue of avoiding the self-fulfilling prophecy. You know: come along over here so we can both see what fools we are.

It seems to me that all of this bears directly on the issue of what can be done, and hence on the matter of moralizing about imagination. There is a good example provided by the nineteenth-century female abolitionists who developed a powerful critique of territorial expansion—overt conquest. That is terribly important, but it does not speak to the problem of nonterritorial expansion. Say, the imposition of economic, political and cultural limits—*or false expectations*—on other societies. Both define imperialism.

Next, the matter of whether or not this is History. You can argue it either way. Let us consider Abraham Lincoln. Look at him as a romantic and he is beyond criticism. The man who freed the slaves. I think Lincoln would view that with contempt. I think Lincoln would say: I gave it a go and it turned sour and you people missed the whole point. I was in truth a failure.

The point about History is to take people seriously. All people: women, blacks and WASPs. Lincoln is like James Madison. They were people laying it on the line about serious matters. That is the reason to respect them and learn from them. I have the thought that we should define History in those terms. History is facts and always more than facts. History is analysis and interpretation and yet more than analysis and interpretation. History is that very best way of knowing in that missing hour of the night that we must respect that knowing in our soul. The recognition that without imagination we are doomed. History tells us to give it a go.

With Lincoln and Madison, but with more imagination.

So on to the limits of imagination. Now nobody in his right mind expects to turn this society around in one fell swoop. I do insist, however, that if we define reality honestly we have a chance to get on beyond here to the threshold of tomorrow. There are two parts to this. The first is that it is simply no longer on the agenda to define American culture as remaking the world. There is no way—no *imaginable* way—to remake the world in our image.

Hence our imagination must concern itself with different objectives. *Meaning who imagines the alternative.* That is scary and even frightful business. I use that word business simply because no business has such freedom in its soul. Nor do academics. Nor do government bureaucrats.

Somebody has got to turn it outside in. It will not do to dismiss that as self-righteous isolation. That misconceives the fundamental issue. It will not do to talk about national security. This is a time to dare.

We have defined the unthinkable in terms of nuclear war. Turn that one inside out, or outside in, and we are on our way. Now, today, we know that unless we exercise and act upon our imagination there *will* be nuclear wars. It comes down, sooner rather than later, to how you define America. If America has no meaning short of remaking the world, then it is over.

I suppose you could look at it this way: America is the last Noah's Ark. We will have another flood and see what happens. The trouble is that we all know what will happen. So it occurs that imagination is *not* moralizing, it is ruthlessly pragmatic. Which is to say that if we don't imagine a different America then we will indeed go out as the ultimate moralizers.

William Appleman Williams

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Classic Disliterature

ANDREW KOPKIND

THE SPIKE. *By Arnaud de Borchgrave and Robert Moss. Crown Publishers. 374 pp. $12.95.*

Intelligence agencies in both the free and fettered worlds employ elaborate Disinformation Departments that feed false facts and spurious secrets to their gullible enemies in order to deform strategy, sow subversion and accumulate discredit. Although the successes of the disinformation business have been slim and its profitability unproved, it is much admired as a glamour industry and demanded as a growth stock. Accordingly, the private sector has jumped into the market. Oil companies spread disinformed estimates about their supplies and costs; chemical conglomerates issue disinformed statistics about product safety; drug companies make disinformed claims for the effectiveness of their potions.

Latest to follow the trend is the publishing business, which appears to be forming Disliterature Departments to produce nonsense novels ostensibly "based" on the daily news: Presidential politics, petroleum wars, terrorism and espionage, love and death in the jet set and disasters in moving vehicles. Disliterature is quickly and cheaply constructed of incomplete press clippings, celebrity party lists and misreadings of contemporary history. It resembles literature as disinformation resembles information: the structure is similar but the purpose is perverse.

The Spike—a tall tale about treachery in high places, sex in several positions and the precipitous decline of the West—looks like a novel, more or less, but it functions as disliterature. Its purpose is to discredit the American left and the liberals who opposed the war in Vietnam and still seek to reform the institutional system that supports imperial adventure. What authors Arnaud de Borchgrave and Robert Moss give us is no novel at all but a fantastic scenario for a neoconservative coup in the national Government and the establishment press, validated by a revival of mass cold-war consciousness.

The authors are news reporters who boast that "between us we knew most of the intelligence directors in the Western world," and they set out first to write a nonfiction tract about spies, moles, dupes and defectors. After a moment's reflection, however, de Borchgrave realized that there was neither fun nor profit in a tome that "read like a Ph.D. thesis," and the disliterature form was chosen. It was finished in a matter of months, quickly secured a place high on the best-seller list, and a dozen weeks after publication has already sold upward of 150,000 hardcover copies. Paperback rights have gone for a reported $150,000. One can only imagine the sums now being bid in the movie rights auction.

There will surely be more elegantly crafted examples of this genre off the presses, but what makes *The Spike* a classic of disliterature is the logic with which its form follows its function. Mossgrave celebrate disinformation the way Woodstein ennobled unattributable anecdotes. *All the President's Men* would have flopped without "Deep Throat." *The Spike* is an extended argument for the re-creation of an old-fashioned Central Intelligence Agency mandated to disinform, destabilize, deceive and dirty the world (that is, the part that leans toward Moscow) with all the old tricks that the reformers would remove from its bag. Such advocacy of deceit as a political instrument gives a certain twisted integrity to disinformation as a literary device.

The Spike begins in 1967 in Sproul Plaza at the University of California at Berkeley, where hero Bob Hockney dabbles desultorily in a political demonstration, then gets down to the more serious business of sex with a sultry coed before the tear gas has settled. A fringe radical from the start, he aspires to recognition as "the greatest journalist of his time," a status he achieves in short order by exposing C.I.A. excesses and military massacres in Vietnam. The inevitable Pulitzer arrives and he lands a job as the ace investigative reporter for New York City's leading newspaper of record.

What Hockney doesn't know, however, is that his leftward political tilt has been directed by agents of the Russian K.G.B.'s all-powerful disinformation department, called "Directorate A." It takes a few traumatic episodes (the kidnapping and death of his girlfriend, the suicide of an agent he exposed) and some cursory soul-searching to convince him that the K.G.B. has a Plan (mystified by the authors' use of an initial capital P) to take over the United States, the Persian Gulf, the Third World and points between. His source is a recently fired C.I.A. deputy director named Nick Flower. The theory checks out with the testimony of a K.G.B. agent who defects after a hot night in a Geneva discothèque, and Hockney writes the Big Story for his paper.

The editor, however, is unpersuaded. Hockney argues that the K.G.B.'s Plan requires no nuclear strike but the persistent penetration by Russian agents of the American media, the Government, the C.I.A., academia and liberal "think tanks"—notably Washington's Institute for Progressive Reform, a Soviet post for liaison with every conceivable comsymp from Georgetown to Qum. With uncommon good sense, the editor consigns Hockney's Big Story to "the spike"—journalese for the circular file.

Undaunted, Hockney enlists the support of a neoconservative Senator from New York, a former United Nations representative and ambassador to a Third World country, who is famous for his contempt for less-developed nations and stalwart in his support of Pentagon projects. This Senator O'Reilly schedules hearings on Hockney's charges with Barisov, the K.G.B. disco defector, as the star witness. Barisov's exposition of The Plan reads like a bulk-mail flyer from the Committee on the Present Danger:

> The Soviet Union has been operating on parallel tracks in its efforts to establish a position of superiority over the Western alliance. One has been the breakneck expansion of Russia's war machine. Another has been the systematic effort to deprive the West of automatic access to its sources of fuel and cheap raw materials. The latest example . . . has been the unopposed conquest of Saudi Arabia by pro-Soviet forces. A third line . . . has been to insinuate agents and others

Andrew Kopkind was a founder of Hard Times *and an editor of* Ramparts, *and writes frequently for magazines.*

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who are subject to Soviet control into positions of influence in Western societies, including positions in the media.

Before long, Barisov is naming names of moles: the liberal Vice President, a Senator who chaired an investigating committee on C.I.A. abuses, an Institute for Progressive Reform member now on the National Security Council staff and, by implication, the director of the C.I.A., a limp-wristed, soft-hearted apologist for his own and his Agency's dirty tricks of years past.

Barisov's testimony results in another death, several resignations and the appointment of Senator O'Reilly to the Vice Presidency—the last stop before the Oval Office. Hockney marries O'Reilly's assistant, and the happy couple sail off to a honeymoon on the island of Rhodes, able once again to sleep soundly with the knowledge that the C.I.A.'s Disinformation Department is working at full capacity.

Mossgrave's *roman* contains enough *clefs* to keep readers (at least those who follow political news) intrigued for weeks. *The Spike*, a reviewer wrote in *Time* magazine, "has occasioned more gossip in Washington than Billy Carter's Libyan connection."

Hockney seems to be based on Seymour Hersh, with some David Halberstam and Robert Scheer added. His first exposés of the C.I.A. were published in *Barricades*—read *Ramparts*. The Institute for Progressive Reform is clearly the Institute for Policy Studies. Its principal financial supporter, Vlad Merchant, is fashioned after Sam Rubin, whose fortunes came from Fabergé perfume. Merchant's daughter, Alexia, is Mossgrave's version of Rubin's daughter, Cora Weiss, the well-known radical activist. Senator Harmon, the C.I.A. investigator, is Frank Church; Vice President Milligan is a Mondale/McGovern amalgam.

The fey C.I.A. Director Crawford who allowed the "emasculation" of the Agency is William Colby; his antagonist in the C.I.A., Nick Flower, is James Angleton (whom Colby fired for Angleton's obsessive search-and-destroy campaign against suspected K.G.B. moles in the intelligence service). Senator O'Reilly, the savior of the Republic, is a lifelike replica of Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Other characters float in and out without disguises: Norman Mailer, Jimmy Carter, Jane Fonda, Robert Silvers. As Flower/Angleton tells Hockney: the secret of disinformation is the use of a kernel of truth. If Norman Mailer is real, so must be Senator Seamus O'Reilly.

Disliterature is essentially part of political history, not literary tradition, and despite its physical format, publication of *The Spike* is a political event. Its publishers recognized that fact. Late in August—after scores of reviews of the book had already been printed—Crown ran a large ad in *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times* charging that "*They*" (Crown's italics) "don't want you to read this book." "They" are "The Soviet K.G.B.," "The 'Liberal' News Media," "The American Literary Establishment." Crown is also promoting the book through a right-wing organization called Accuracy in Media Inc., which devoted its entire June newsletter to *The Spike*, and is offering the book to its readers as a premium. Crown's publicist, Marcia Harrison, memorandized the publisher's employees that "*Accuracy in Media* is a conservative newsletter that reaches all the right SPIKE-people in their circulation—approximately 100,000." She obviously has targeted the book's Tory audience.

While some liberal and left publications have written unfavorable reviews, the bulk of *The Spike*'s notices have been favorable. The neoconservative *Commentary* loved it; Sunbelt papers are almost uniformly enthusiastic; *Human Events* raved. Ronald Reagan is a fan—a photograph circulated to newspapers in June showed the candidate reading *The Spike* aboard his campaign plane. Indeed, *The Spike* may have earned a better critical reception than Crown's other current best seller, *Princess Daisy*.

But Crown's ad is another element of the disinformation process, not merely promotional hype. It makes the same fictitious point that the authors do—that a K.G.B. plan is operating to prepare America for a Russian takeover. "Is there a media conspiracy to spike *The Spike*?" asks the ad. "Or does *The Spike* simply shatter too many cherished notions about the intentions of the Soviet Union and the objectivity of today's news reporting?" Crown's promotion campaign also involved a twenty-six-city tour by the authors, who saturated local radio, television and print media with their political arguments. In a *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* interview, for example, de Borchgrave said:

> The very reason the C.I.A. exists is the K.G.B. The K.G.B. employs one million people, and 400,000 of them are in espionage disinformation headquarters around the world. . . . I think the public at large is fed up with this campaign of dismantling the C.I.A., and . . . realizes that the C.I.A. is up against a worldwide problem called the K.G.B. . . . I'm very confident that we're going to see major stories on [the disinformation glut] in the next few months.

The remantling of the C.I.A. is a crucial element in the political context that produced *The Spike*, and it helps explain the uses of disinformation. For several years, disparate groups of politicians, cultural commissars and social critics along the spectrum of neoconservative and right-wing sympathies have tried to steer America on a new cold-war course. The groups include the "defense intellectuals" and intelligence operatives who rationalized and ran the war in Vietnam and were humiliated by their defeat, the unswerving supporters of Israeli Government policy who fear that America has "lost its nerve" to defend its allies, the centrists in the Democratic Party who lost power to the liberals in 1972 (and, to an extent, in 1976), the Pentagon and its corporate

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THUNDER ON THE RIGHT

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clients and the "moral majority," which believes that America's loss of imperial supremacy is somehow related to the decline of traditional social values.

Many of these groups, with their special concerns, have come together recently in the Reagan campaign, or in coalitions to lobby for specific issues: against the SALT II treaty, for new military weapons systems and the draft registration law, against Government payments for abortion and legal aid for gay-rights litigation, for restrictions on "whistle-blowing" by critics of military and intelligence policies.

In the old cold war, the "enemy within" was the Communist Party and its fellow travelers. With the demise of the C.P. as a credible bogeyman, a new enemy has been created: the K.G.B.'s moles and their liberal dupes. Such was the conspiracy theory developed by the C.I.A.'s Angleton and rejected by Colby. Now from outside the Agency, the Angletonians seem to be organizing a campaign to promote the line which Mossgrave expound in *The Spike*. It's all there: the sinister operations of the Institute for Policy Studies, the invasion of the mole people, the collaboration of *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, the absence of "ballsy" (the authors' word) men in the foreign policy directorate, the treachery of C.I.A. dropouts like Philip Agee and Victor Marchetti, the failure of nerve by post-Vietnam Presidents to move militarily against Russians, Marxists and assorted insurgents around the world. In *The Spike*, Flower/Angleton is the ballsy hero; Crawford/Colby is the effete villain.

In their previous journalistic work, both de Borchgrave and Moss were identifiable members of the new cold-war coterie. De Borchgrave was, until recently, *Newsweek*'s longtime link to America's client tyrants; with supreme sympathy, he interviewed the Shah of Iran on several occasions for *Newsweek*. His report on rampant Castroism in Jamaica, published in 1977, is regularly cited by Prime Minister Michael Manley as an example of disinformation used in the effort to destabilize his Government.

Moss—who edits the Foreign Report of the London *Economist*—has had more specific relationships with the intelligence community, as well as with several rightist tyrannies around the world. According to ABC-TV, Moss edited the Nicaraguan weekly magazine *Vision*, owned by the late President Anastasio Somoza. He wrote an extremely critical account of the Allende Government in Chile, which—according to the London *Guardian*—was funded, in part, by Forum World Features, identified by that newspaper (among other sources) as a C.I.A. front. In Britain he was known as a staunch supporter of white rule in Rhodesia, and his scenario for a Soviet takeover of South Africa is widely quoted and reprinted by whites in Johannesburg.

Although some critics of *The Spike* believe the book is a C.I.A. creation, it seems to be both unnecessary and irresponsible to pose one fanciful conspiracy theory to counter another. However they arrived at their perceptions of the world, the authors clearly believe what they write. What makes it disinformation is its illogic and implausibility, its origins in both the experiences and the paranoias of the authors rather than in the realities of the world. For example, the C.I.A. used to set up "independent" research institutes in foreign countries to carry out operations considered inappropriate for the Agency's actual operatives in the U.S. embassies. In Chile, the C.I.A.'s think tank was called the Institute for General Studies. It is not much of a leap for an espionage buff to imagine—without any objective evidence—that the K.G.B. used the same trick. Writing in the *National Review*, Brian Crozier—the leading British cold-war intellectual and Moss's spiritual mentor—called the Institute for Policy Studies "the perfect intellectual front for Soviet activities which would be resisted if they were to originate openly from the K.G.B." Q. E. D.

The trouble with disinformation is that it is a game played primarily by intelligence agencies against one another, a spectator sport that may captivate but rarely concerns its audience. Like many bureaucratic practices, it is self-validating and self-perpetuating. We certainly would be much richer, and hardly less secure, if the whole business were spiked. □

Legal Storyteller

JOHN P. MacKENZIE

THE LAW OF THE LAND. *By Charles Rembar. Simon & Schuster. 448 pp. $12.95.*

Legal history need not be left to the legal historians. It's too much fun to remain an academic monopoly and too important to an understanding of both modern life and modern law. More than ever, people are conscious of their "rights" and eager to argue and litigate them, often contending, accurately or not, that their rights have ancient roots. To appreciate the historical depths of a legal question can be more than intellectually rewarding—it can help predict whether judges and lawmakers will recognize the claim.

One who believes and practices this open-market idea of legal history is Charles Rembar, a literate lawyer for literary clients. His book, subtitled *The Evolution of Our Legal System*, is the work of a true amateur, a lover of law history who indulges this passion on his own time.

Not that this survey of ten centuries romanticizes the ancients. Rembar is a storyteller, not a balladeer: "It will upset some readers to hear that human beings have in the last one thousand years improved." For every noble pronouncement on liberty, privacy and honor there were dozens of tyrants, savage masters and double-crossers. Rembar tells it like it was. The case for rehabilitating Middle Age lawgivers "is made by ignoring the daily life and death of most of those who inhabited the Middle Ages." To the historian who saw feudal society as based on the sanctity of the plighted word, Rembar reacts: "It was hardly basic. Whenever anything thought to be of value was at stake, the plighted word was ignored. Lies and broken promises pervade the history of the time. The society was built not on honor but on military force and religious dread, with intermittent injections of reason and the idea of law."

Unrelieved ancient historical narrative can be tedious, but Rembar freely associates in ideas and time to freshen his message. "Every case at law is first

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of all a story," and one story leads to another. A tale about a nineteenth-century attempt to revive ancient "trial by battle" in England leads Rembar to a discussion of alibi defenses, which gives him the unresisted urge to talk about Ring Lardner, whose short story about Alibi Ike colors the way some folks feel about making excuses. Footnotes for other authors are citations to authority and deeper detail. For Rembar they are digressions to the present, usually to demonstrate the aforesaid relevance of ancient law to modern life.

That relevance is well displayed when he talk turns to the power of juries, ancient and modern. Rembar first shows how the jury evolved from the tool of monarchs and chieftains to the democratizing instrument some think it is today. Then he explores the consequences of the change. Should jurors be told how powerful they really are, that they can acquit a defendant they deem oppressed —or convict a defendant they don't happen to like? One man's miscarriage of justice is another's popular sovereignty. Should such "jury nullification" of the formal law be left to chance, exercised only by those who happen to sense their de facto power? I won't say how that story comes out, but will say this: I don't agree with all of Rembar's answers to these questions—especially his view that juries often are unaffordable luxuries—but he is thorough and thoughtful as well as fearless in drawing his own conclusions.

What I do deny is Rembar's elitist premise: "that the law ought to be a bit beyond the reach of ordinary understanding. It has the difficult job of finding efficient rules that will not too often cause hardship in specific cases. For this job, just-plain-common-sense will not do. Good law lies somewhere between the obvious and recondite."

We the readers, though not necessarily We the People, are not treated in this condescending way, for we share in an understanding that surpasses the common. The trouble is that more and more people of ordinary understanding are participating in the legal process today. They insist that laws make sense. In a self-governing nation of laws, good law will be closer to the obvious. Law will not be left to the lawyers. □

Fictional Camouflage

SAUL LANDAU

INTERVENTIONS. *By Patrick Breslin. Doubleday & Company. 263 pp. $10.95.*

A middle-class Chilean woman, Marisa, has a torrid affair with an attractive American, Paul. She matures, finds herself and her place in the world, thanks to the social transformation taking place in her own country after the election of Salvador Allende. The young American, however, joins the Central Intelligence Agency from an abstract notion of wanting to help poor Latins and, as his former lover emerges as a committed revolutionary, he becomes the C.I.A.'s bagman to funnel money to Chile's fascists and hoodlums. He and his colleagues commit "interventions" in the life of Chile as a nation and in the lives of individual Chileans.

Saul Landau is the author, with John Dinges, of Assassination on Embassy Row *(Pantheon) and is a senior fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C.*

The old love affair is briefly rekindled, thanks to Andean scenery and sex in the outdoors, but the Chilean heroine is too strong for the American moral coward. She needs more solid qualities than the anguished boy scout can provide. The *coup d'état* strikes; repression follows and determines the fate of the novel's characters—and by implication, the destinies of all Chileans and some Americans.

The fiction approach serves as a kind of camouflage for a morality play. Patrick Breslin, who lived in Chile during this hectic and tragic era, chose a literary form with which to express his own outrage while at the same time judging a policy. The policy played itself out in its effects on individuals; it defined limits and possibilities.

Paul, the American: a man who can survive in the woods, at one with nature, but not with himself. Sunday school values persist, but offer flabby resistance to the heavier determinants of C.I.A. orders. Love for him becomes as abstracted as right and wrong. He romanticizes it, exaggerating the importance of plain old sex. The very notion of morality conflicts with his daily job requirements and makes his life uncomfortable, while at the same time, the romantic in him turns to pseudocynicism. Then self-doubt intervenes. His fellow C.I.A. officials and his Chilean agent are cardboard creeps who emerge as no more than a chorus of vultures devoid of moral sense. One of their wives suffers from her husband's careerism, but expresses herself through alcoholism and overt horniness. The Chilean C.I.A. man extols his son as a patriot, but the novel depicts him as a coward and a bully—a fascist. Morality for the intervenors disappears as a relevant life factor—if it ever existed. "Interventions" means the George Allen football morality: only winning counts, not looking at what is won, or lost.

Marisa, the Chilean: a woman who, as the novel begins, is dependent on men, physically and emotionally. She achieves her liberation through struggle and torture, and emerges as a twentieth-century Third World Christ, one whose heart has unlimited capacity for love —of individuals and causes—and also is capable of judging the imperialists, U.S. policy and her former lover.

The other Chileans remain underdeveloped—fascist monsters or socialist heroes. They serve as props for the two unfolding characters; Breslin uses them only when needed to push the story or his central figures.

Interventions, then, is an old-fashioned story about a relatively new subject that has gripped all who have come into contact with it. U.S. policy toward Chile upset some liberal Americans as much or even more than Vietnam, and many have rightfully complained about C.I.A. activities. The novel is about right and wrong and does penetrate beneath this language of complaint to bring out the feelings of genuine outrage over what one country did to another via secret policies, budgets and agents. Countries, after all, consist of people: those who loved and worked to build the present and those who will come from that heritage. And American people, following orders from Washington, befouled the work of centuries to destroy an "annoyance" in the present—destroyed a heritage under the banner of an anti-Communist crusade. The issues involved in U.S. intervention are profound, complex and, therefore, ill-suited to be simplified in literary form. By expressing both his outrage and sorrow in the third-person *roman à clef*, Breslin imposes limits on

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his own passion and intelligence.

The novel's dialogue between political friends and rivals emerges as stiff and stagy; the plot is structured for narrow rather than enlarged political possibilities. One senses that Breslin has held himself back and that had he chosen a first-person essay form he would have been able to reveal more dramatic insights about Chile and about the moral anguish that the sensitive must feel about the act of political intervention.

Breslin is a moralist. On those occasions in which he allows himself freedom from the bonds of his form, he brings the reader with him to the mountains of Chile, and his pen occasionally scratches at the ethical blackboard of sensitive North Americans. For a first novel, *Interventions* succeeds in holding the reader, despite the story and plot lines. This is due to Breslin's power. His next book should meet with an eager audience. □

Mysterious Treasure

RICHARD ELMAN

MY SEARCH FOR TRAVEN. *By Jonah Raskin. Methuen. 260 pp. $12.95.*

This is a relatively new genre: having chosen to write the biography of a leftish author of world renown who could be mystifying about so many details of his personal life, including his real name and birthplace, Jonah Raskin writes about why he wasn't able to do the job and about his own problems and ordeals in finding out that the late B. Traven was successful in obscuring some of his past. There's no coherent narrative account of Traven's career here (or, for that matter, Hal Croves's or T. Torsvan's), but we are given a series of anecdotes about Traven's Mexico interspersed with insightful readings from the works, and in the process we probably learn as much about Jonah Raskin as we do about the author of *Death Ship, Treasure of the Sierra Madre* and "The Jungle" series of novels.

Raskin justifies such a procedure by relying heavily on words like "mystery" and "mysterious" to explain what he cannot know. He tells us that Traven, like Mexico's ancient indigenous population, was preoccupied with the "mysterious" spiritualist elements of human experience. And whenever he feels compelled to deal with Traven's simple mystifications to others, or even his various aliases, in this unsystematic exploration of the writer's milieu, he leans rather heavily on that hackneyed word "mystery":

> I embraced mystery. I wrapped myself in its folds, but not as an evasion. My search for Traven has taught me above all to appreciate, to revere the power of mystery. Mystery expressed my sense of life—its beauty and strangeness. It conveyed my feeling that the universe was always in flux, always changing, yielding surprises, and was never finally or *completely knowable* [italics mine]. We stood in the light of mystery that quickly shaded into the mysterious darkness.

Traven really did prefer to make his biography difficult to uncover; he went to the filming of John Huston's *Treasure of the Sierra Madre* disguised as his putative literary agent, Hal Croves. But Raskin's account of his own experiences inside Mexico as scholarly tourist is "completely knowable," requires little deep rumination and is often amusing. He provides us with a vividly entertaining account of what remains of Traven's circle in Mexico City and other places in the backlands that were so important to the author. He has read all of Traven's works well, with care and knowledge, but tries to make more of less sometimes, when what he had was quite enough.

Ensconsed, for a while, on the Rio Mississippi in Traven's grand *zona rosa* residence, he has access to important journals, manuscripts, correspondence, death masks, plaster casts of the author's hands, trunks full of souvenirs, closets of memorabilia. Whether going through the pockets of Traven's old suits, or the pigeonholes in his writing desk, or wearing his jockey shorts, much that Raskin tells us by way of imaginative extrapolation is intelligent and rich. He fills us in on German radical politics before and after World War I (since Traven could have been Ret Marut, radical and editor of *Die Ziegelbrenner* [The Brickburner]).

Because he is a sensitive man, with intelligent politics, Raskin finally differentiates Traven's mysticism from the vague blah-mongerings of writers such as Hermann Hesse, or his latter-day disciples:

> B. Traven and the hippie walk the path of mystery, spirituality, and magic together, but when they reach the cross roads of labor, exploitation and armed rebellion they part company. The hippie searches for utopia, blinded to the reality of this world. B. Traven dreamed of utopia, but never lost sight of hell.

No, Traven was not an airhead. Bitter, sentimental, passionate, with the ability to depict a strong sense of place, or Indian speech and conduct, Traven loved honest labor, simple cultivation, Indian ways. The exploitation of Indians by Ladinos and the corruptions of Yankee mores angered him; he hated the ignorance of the enlightened, had nothing but contempt for inhuman industrial progress. The ideal of *tierra y libertad* was strong in him, even as he was aware of the corrupt authoritarian ways of the Mexican Republic after it came to power.

In this he was certainly not alone among the leftists and others of the Mexican establishment with whom he socialized. Even Traven's upper-class widow, Rosa Elena Lujan, for example, was not immune from holding strongly nationalistic prejudices involving indigenous Mexico. When the Polish Pope came to Mexico City a couple of years back, her daughter told me Rosa Elena said it was a terrible shame John Paul would be visiting Oaxaca. "*So?*" she was asked: "*Why . . . ?*" "Because Oaxaca is the birthplace of Benito Juárez," Rosa Elena pointed out, aghast.

Many in Traven's Mexico City crowd were refugees from Europe or the United States; a few were former proletarians who'd made it into the Mexican establishment. What may have seemed so attractive about him to them was his real knowledge of Mexico and its Indians. He seemed to know the life better than they did. At some point in his career, it was clear (from his often beautiful, or savage, or compassionate stories of exploited labor and hunger, such as *March to the Monteria*, or *Macario*) that he'd lived among the Chamulas of Chiapas, or the Chontal-speakers of Tabasco; he seemed to have worked with the cotton, oil and mahogany workers, shared their meals and quarters, floated amid their la-

Richard Elman's latest novel is The Breadfruit Lotteries *(Methuen). His recently published book of poems is called* In Chontales *(Street Press).*

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goons and listened to their stories of brutalization and hunger. Traven's literary co-worker was the sister of a Mexican President, but he never lost sight of hell because, much earlier, whether on the lam, or simply making his way in boom-town Tampico, or by subsistence farming, he had surely experienced some of it directly.

He may have been a follower of Augusto Sandino (who also worked in Tampico a while), or the last Kaiser's love child; we know him best through the passion of his language on behalf of Mexicans. On the opening page of *General from the Jungle* he writes:

> Whatever in their miserable oppression . . . they sensed of poetry, of a desire for beauty, of love for mankind and living creatures, of natural faith in some absolute justice that must be found somewhere, as well as deeply felt sorrow for their comrades who had been horribly murdered or bestially tortured to death—all this, and much more . . . unknown to them, slumbering within them, found its expression in that single war cry. Even when one united mass, impelled by one and the same urge, they raised their clenched fists in unison as if exhorting God not to forget them . . . every man in that throng sensed clearly his own individual cry mingling with the others, for in the depths of his being he felt it as his very own, his deeply personal prayer.

Traven's work varies in quality; he sometimes works with stereotypes of innocent peasants and crass middle-class greediness. He is also an atmospheric writer of only occasional tenderness. Raskin says Traven isn't quite up to depicting the man-woman relationship except in the usual macho terms, and has quotes to prove it; yet I recall with pleasure *March to the Monteria* where, through conversation, he depicts the growth of friendship between a younger mahogany serf and an Indian woman, an intimacy that is shown developing in time as they travel further into the jungle. Generally, though, comradeship looms larger than eros; work is made more important than love or sex; hunger or need dramatized more often than pleasure. Traven was telling adventure stories. Because he shared radical commitments, he reversed the traditional value system of such a genre in which the native was the primitive and the white man the brave adventurous civilizer, in which killing natives was courageous and the progress brought by Christians was civilizing.

There is much of death and suffering in Traven's writing. Raskin is right to point out, I think, that the bone man figure in *Macario* probably did have its origins in indigenous materials, but it was also from Traven's imagination. He fabricated some legends and myths as only a man who had steeped himself in such experiences could dare to invent them. Whether or not Traven also invented those stories and incidents in which he portrayed himself or his persona giving medical attention to Indians with gunshot wounds or drowning trauma, probably isn't as important for us to know as it is to realize that Traven, with his white face and background, was taking the pains to dramatize such interactions with poignancy and charm.

Raskin sees Traven, initially, as one enemy of an imperialist civilization that produced high literature by slighting and continuing to slight the nonwhite peoples of the world. But Raskin also qualifies Traven's political concerns with his own sense of life and literature. Describing a reading he once gave of the author's finest writing over an English-language radio station in Mexico City, he tells us: "I had not read passages about the state, exploitation, or proletarians. Instead I had chosen descriptions of death, loneliness, hallucination, lyrical passages, and passages that modulated between laughter and tears."

In the last years of his life Traven wrote no new fiction. He fooled with screen plays, excited by the success of *Sierra Madre* and the interest of other film makers. It would be interesting to know, if toward the end, Traven was also as despairing of Mexico as he had been about Europe and the United States, or if his silence was a function of old age and failing faculties. He lost favor with some leftists because he did not speak out against the Government's massacre of students in Mexico City in 1968. Traven wasn't interested in students. He cared about *campesinos*, Indians, former serfs. He became self-absorbed and isolated, after a while, from these new Mexican realities, and, as Raskin reminds us, he was sick and died less than a year after the massacre. □

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THEATER

JULIUS NOVICK

The Suicide

> Hello—is this the Kremlin? This is Podsekalnikov. P-O-D-S-E-K-A-L-N-I-K-O-V. An individual. I-N-D-I-V-I-D-U-A-L. I want to speak to someone at the top. . . . (*Hangs up phone.*) They've hung up on me! They're scared! . . . They're scared—of me!

Thus Semyon Semyonovich Podsekalnikov, the hero of *The Suicide* by Nikolai Erdman. And indeed they were scared, so scared that they suppressed *The Suicide* after a dress rehearsal in 1932, and it still has never been published or publicly performed in the Soviet Union. But we Americans can see it—bourgeois democracy has its advantages—in a magnificent production at New York's ANTA Theater.

Stalin's censors knew what they were doing when they banned it. Semyon Semyonovich is a Soviet citizen who considers suicide because he is unemployed. But had not unemployment been abolished in the Soviet Union? Semyon is quickly surrounded by people who are eager to turn his suicide into a statement. "Nowadays," says one of

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them, "only the dead are allowed to say what the living are thinking." There are two romantic women who want him to declare that he is killing himself for love, but most of the rest—the intellectual, the writer, the businessman, the priest—are unmistakably trying to voice a protest.

Erdman is not simply an anti-Soviet propagandist, which is just as well in the present circumstances: it would be too easy for an American audience to sit down to an evening of nothing but anti-Soviet jokes and to arise smugly, its own withers unwrung. In *The Suicide* those who protest against the system are themselves vigorously satirized. They are not really concerned with Semyon: they only want to appropriate his death for their own purposes. They are obsessives, one-track minds, very traditional comic butts: Molière and Ben Jonson would recognize them at once.

Still, the weight of discontent is unmistakable. Gorky called Erdman "our new Gogol," but what does a Stalin want with a Gogol? Erdman is actually more rebellious than Gogol: nobody in *The Inspector General* would have dreamed of calling up the Kremlin in so peremptory a tone. Semyon's own discontent is at the heart of the play, and it cannot be dismissed as mere quirkishness, for Semyon is not an obsessive but an innocent explorer, a discoverer, a Candide, an Everyman.

Near the beginning of the play there are some rather mechanical episodes of farce, as when Semyon attempts to solve his economic problems by learning to play the bass tuba. But at the end of the first act he has his own "To be or not to be" speech. Left alone with his revolver and a neighbor's boy, he asks desperately, "Is there life after death?" But the boy is deaf and dumb. At this point we see how far beyond mechanical farce, how far beyond even the witty bustle of his satire, Erdman is capable of going.

At a banquet given in his honor, Semyon suddenly becomes aware of the position that his impending death has given him: he is the only man in Russia who is not afraid. His phone call to the Kremlin increases his exultation, but he cannot sustain it in the face of the suicide that so many people now expect from him. His good Falstaffian cowardice comes to the fore. He rejects, as Falstaff did, the idea of sacrificing his life for anyone's cause or principle or ax-to-grind. "I want to live!" he says. He embraces himself:

> I'm madly in love with my own stomach, I love these arms, and I love these legs—and look at these lovely little feet! . . . "To each according to his need." Well, what about *my* needs?

The New Soviet Man is nowhere in evidence in *The Suicide*, not even in its one declared Marxist, a postman who writes letters to the newspaper signed "35,000 Loyal Postal Workers." "That's my pen name," he explains. Under socialism, says this zealot, there will be no individuals, only masses: "masses of masses." But in the play we see no masses, just a number of very peculiar personages, all going in their own directions, and in the midst of them Semyon Semyonovich Podsekalnikov, developing the self-definition he declares in his phone call to the Kremlin: "I-N-D-I-V-I-D-U-A-L." This celebration of the individual and his unconditional avidity for life, above any possible ideology, is the fullest extent of Erdman's heresy.

The Soviet censors haven't changed much over the decades. Forty years after the banning of *The Suicide*, a production of *Macbeth*, staged by a Lithuanian director named Jonas Jurasas, was canceled by the authorities shortly before its scheduled opening in Moscow. When Jurasas protested publicly, he was dismissed from his position and forbidden to work at his profession; after two years he emigrated to America. Last season he directed the American premiere of *The Suicide* for the Trinity Square Repertory Company in Providence, Rhode Island, and that led to the current Broadway production, staged by Jurasas with a new cast.

Lavishly, brilliantly, boldly, Jurasas has created for the play, and *with* the play, a world that is both highly fantastic and richly Russian. In Santo Loquasto's extraordinary setting, Erdman's Moscow tenement has become a hall of doors, two tiers of them, one above the other, through which the neighbors can teem into the life of Semyon Semyonovich, who sleeps with his wife, Maria Lukyanovna, in a bed at center stage. As the play begins, Semyon is having a nightmare: hands, heads, bodies appear from behind the bed and under it. When Semyon and his wife get up, the nightmare-figments swarm all over the bed; by the time Semyon is assured that "Life is beautiful," they have turned into a gypsy orchestra, ready to amplify the sentiment with music, song and dance. When Semyon is having trouble shooting himself, two men sing to him, "Give it all you've got," as they descend from the flies on a bier destined for him. No one can say that *The Suicide* is underdirected, yet the staging serves the play, deepening its dreamlike strangeness without losing a sense that the whole thing is founded on solid, sausagelike realities.

Loquasto's costumes are vivid metaphors for the characters. The intellectual, nicely played by John Heffernan as a touching old wisp of a man, wears a threadbare tailcoat and a skinny, dangly scarf; a faded beauty (Laura Esterman) has a delicate, shabby, silver-spangled black lace shawl, like a spiderweb that had caught an exceptional number of flies. The acting is sometimes too noisy, but Derek Jacobi as Semyon is admirably not tempted by the prevailing fortissimi. He begins as a convincingly ordinary fellow, even though he speaks British while the others speak American, and opens out into a fine, ingenuous sense of wonder. It is largely thanks to him, I suspect, that the development of Semyon's consciousness becomes so clearly and affectingly the real story of the evening.

If our theater can bring us (with a little help from its friends) such a production of such a play as this, perhaps it is not in such dire straits as we tend to assume. Our shamed and bewildered country can take, for a change, some legitimate pride in having enabled those two powerful silenced voices, Erdman and Jurasas, to be heard again, and heard together. □

DANCE

JOHN GRUEN

Makarova and Company

It is entirely appropriate for a dancer of Natalia Makarova's stature and artistry to present herself as a creative force on Broadway, bringing her extraordinary gifts to bear on an art of which she is among the day's most sublime representatives. And it is equally fitting that she surround herself with a roster of dancers of glittering talent. Anthony Dowell, Fernando Bujones, Denys Ganio, Elisabetta Terabust, Cynthia Gregory, Karen Kain and Peter Schauruss are names to reckon with in the

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ballet world. In addition, Makarova has personally chosen and carefully coached a series of soloists and a corps de ballet who serve to complete a company she has stated will remain intact and perform on tour in America as well as abroad.

What Makarova failed to do, at least as her opening program at New York's Uris Theater made clear, was to offer herself and her magnetic entourage a repertory that would bring into telling focus her creative ideals. Instead, one was in the presence of an instant ballet company that performed works of inferior quality—works that almost invariably undermined the high artistry of the dancers involved.

The evening began with a garishly costumed production of *Paquita, Act II*, a lightweight Petipa classic first produced in St. Petersburg in 1881. Long known in the West as a standard pas de deux warhorse, this expanded version, restaged by Makarova, featured the Italian ballerina Elisabetta Terabust and Fernando Bujones, abetted by soloists and a group of corps girls, each a hand-picked student from the School of American Ballet, the official school of the New York City Ballet. Given the inexperience of the corps, which dominated the work, this *Paquita* emerged as a workshop exercise boasting two major stars seemingly brought in to give weight and substance to an essentially weightless trifle. Terabust and Bujones danced with predictable bravura and éclat, placing their virtuosity in the service of *déjà vu* variations, and concurrently putting their young co-dancers in the disadvantageous position of unmerited professionalism. It is true that under Makarova's knowledgeable Kirov eye the youngsters' *port de bras*, *épaulement* and head positions were admirably sustained, but their efforts were so studied as to rob the work of the spontaneity and snap upon which *Paquita* should ride.

Maurice Bejart, a choreographer of vastly uneven talent, was represented by one of his less overwrought works, *Sonata No. 5 for Harpsichord and Violin* (J. S. Bach), an extended pas de deux first created for Suzanne Farrell and Jorge Dunn in 1974, and seen in New York when Bejart's Ballet of the Twentieth Century performed at the Brooklyn Academy. On the highly resonant bodies of Makarova and Dowell this duet transcended Bejart's inherent banalities, almost but never quite transforming its quirky choreographic content into a substantive and pliant expressiveness. When superb performers undertake a mediocre work, the results are often charged with intonations that produce meaning where none exists.

Such was the case with *Sonata No. 5*, in which both artists delineated space to form a magnificently controlled technical geometry. But considering its length of some twenty minutes, one longed for some psychological clarity—some viable contact of either mind or spirit between the hard-working protagonists. But no glimmer of a relationship either at war or at peace was discerned. It was pure abstraction designed to test the virtues of steps well executed and lifts, turns, jumps and other rigors easily negotiated. This would be entirely welcome and engrossing were the movements infused with the tensions and dynamics of a fertile choreographic imagination. But Bejart's soft-center work evoked an off-putting self-consciousness that even so inspired a partnership as Makarova and Dowell could not override.

Neither total ballet stardom nor impeccable technique could save the evening's final work, the premiere of Lorca Massine's *Vendetta*, set to a score by Konstantin Kazansky, with sets and costumes by Rouben Ter-Arutunian. This was gypsy folderol of a very droll order. Makarova as "The Woman" has wildly sensual flings with Ganio, "The First Man"; Bujones, "The Second Man," and Dowell, "The Third Man," as a flock of gypsy men and women rush in frenzied abandon on and off stage. We are in the land of *Scheherazade* or on the set of Valentino's *The Sheik*, and the breathing is heavy! Makarova in beads, baubles and bangles acts the gypsy siren with a passion worthy of Theda Bara at her steamiest. As the gypsy seductees, Ganio, Bujones and Dowell give the word "wasted" a whole new meaning. Assuming preposterous stylized poses and gestures, they work valiantly to impose a classical vocabulary upon the ritual stances Massine calls the "gypsy lore of Eastern European cultures." There were titters in the audience as the voice of a singer (Veronique Codolban) made what one assumed were gypsy love noises, and Kazansky's score tried but failed to evoke a synthesis of gypsy-inspired folk music. Clearly, *Vendetta* added little luster to Makarova and Company.

Makarova has stated that her motives for forming her group were to assemble seasoned artists and talented novices who, in consort with gifted choreographers, composers and stage designers, would perform a fresh repertory as well as assay certain shorter classics. It would be a small, manageable company over which she would have complete artistic control and in which her own rarefied experience as dancer and promulgator of the Kirov tradition would serve as an overall inspiration. So far, however, the Soviet ballerina has merely provided a series of showcase vehicles—the sort that any ballet company throws together for a fund-raising benefit. For all her good intentions, Makarova seems to have lost sight of that which is central to such an enterprise: a point of view and commitment to an esthetic goal that would underscore personal vision as embodied in balletic style and choreographic choice. □

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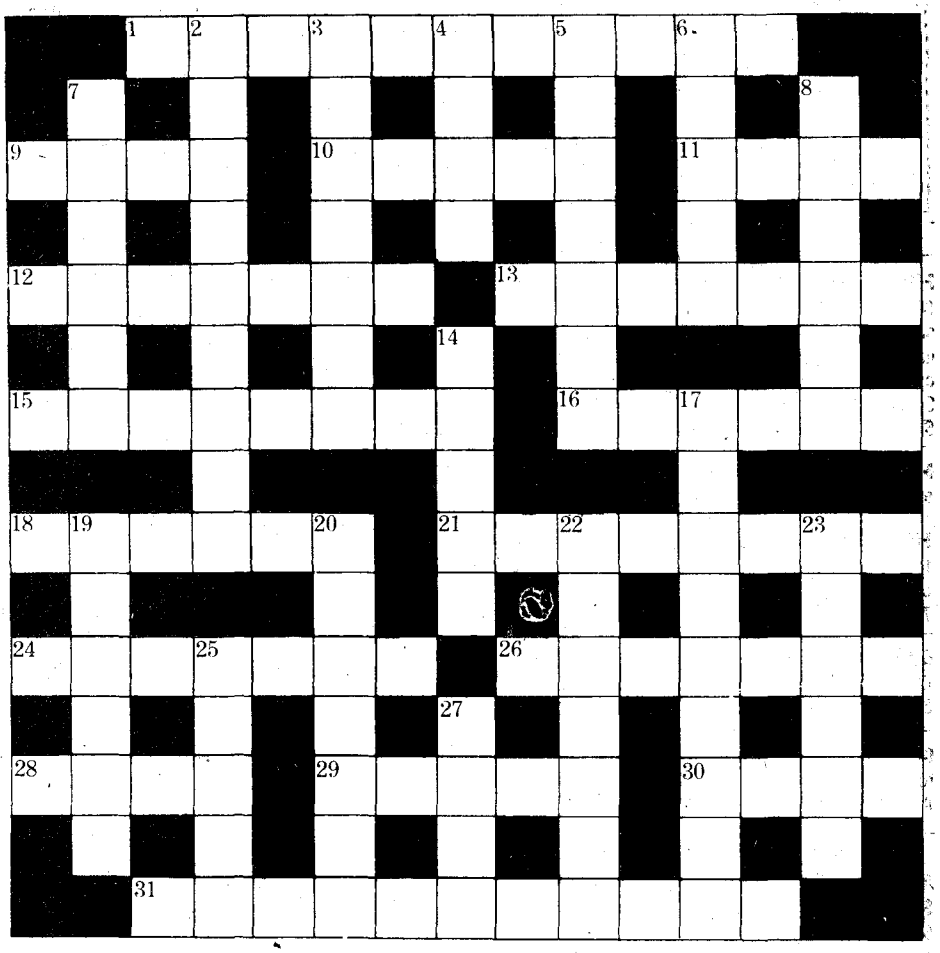

ACROSS

1 Obviously the better-than-good old days were still tense. (4,7)
9, 10 and 11 By which Casca provided the rent? (4,2,3,4)
12 It goes "boom" with an explosion of color in it—but the rest may be there. (7)
13 Not exactly the gal Mama formed a combination with. (7)
15 and 16 Evidently the magazine is coming out with "A Developing Country" or something similar. (8,6)
18 Finally, philosophy (thus in Latin) in the purge. (6)
21 The flower of TV? (It might be knobby!) (8)
24 On top of fire, if someone is doing it? Quite the opposite! (7)
26 Supposedly different for other folks—though they could be dangerous to your health. (7)
28, 29 and 30 How to surprise and disconcert, with eats prepared afterward. (The overmodest might.) (4,1,4,4)
31 The third little one who said "and I see her now!" might do it just in case. (4,7)

DOWN

2 Mr. Big's are sort of valuable. (You might lose the scent without it.) (9)
3 Did they stumble on a sort of oil here? (7)
4 Partakes of 30. (4)
5 Abolition was supposed to, and also woman, being responsible for Lee's Lieutenants. (7)
6 Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley and Lauderdale—by coincidence. (5)
7 A master of deception, or a flower? (6)
8 Sixteen pages—remember you're counting each side! (6)
14 One of those things that might be strait, or just stone. (5)
17 But sister, too, could be comparatively slow! (9)
19 Where to look for something that takes off in an Afghan garment. (6)
20 Horseman? Both! (7)
22 Give a sign, and be one that gets you through the turnstile. (7)
23 Look in the present and the past—possibly for a ride. (6)
25 The part that sounds opposed to war? (5)
27 One may have to pay it to one for a ride, of sorts. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1840

ACROSS: 1 Pickwick Papers; 9 Routine; 10 Roomful; 11 East Lynne; 12 and 22 Onionskins; 13 Absinth; 15 Aaronic; 16 Crowded; 18 Nippier; 23 Sundial; 24 Imbibed; 25 As the case may be. DOWN: 1 Parmesan cheese; 2 Courses; 3 Whirling dervish; 4 Clean; 5 Porcelain; 6 Photograph album; 7 Ruffian; 8 Blank cartridge; 14 Hydraulic; 17 Outings; 19 Ignobly.

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